



# Forward Work Program 2007–08 to 2009–10

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS





# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## Forward Work Program 2007–08 to 2009–10

Australian Bureau of Statistics  
Canberra



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## Preface

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is Australia's official statistical agency. It provides statistics on a wide range of economic, environmental and social matters, covering government, business and the population in general. It also has an important leadership and coordination function with respect to the statistical activities of other official bodies, both in Australia and overseas.

The ABS has recently implemented some significant changes to its organisational structure, to provide new opportunities for senior managers to pursue the strategic objectives which currently have the highest priority. These objectives are associated with the National Statistical Service (NSS) initiative, which aims to strengthen and further develop Australia's national statistical system, and reinforce the ABS' statistical leadership role in that system.

This document describes the strategic directions we will be adopting and the forward work program, and key developments, for our statistical and associated service areas.

Information about the full range of ABS publications and products is provided on the ABS web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>. For assistance in accessing ABS products, contact the National Information Referral Service. See Products and Services (page 10) for information on this service.

Brian Pink  
Australian Statistician

July 2007

## Notes to this Publication

### Theme pages

The ABS web site contains theme pages that bring together all published ABS statistical information relating to a specific topic or region. They provide links to related ABS products and non-ABS statistical information. They may also provide information on ABS collections relating to the theme and notifications of ongoing statistical matters of interest to users.

Theme pages can be accessed from the ABS web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>. On the home page, select from the list of Themes available in the vertical navigation bar.

### Methods, classifications, concepts and standards

The ABS produces a range of products that describe the concepts, sources and methods used to compile Australia's major economic, environmental and social statistics. These products provide background information that will assist users in analysing and interpreting the statistics and include standard classifications used in the ABS, for example, industry, occupation, commodity, country, languages, labour force and social classifications.

Methods, classifications, concepts and standards are available from the ABS web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>. From the home page, select Methods, Classifications, Concepts & Standards on the horizontal navigation bar.

### Resources

Resource costs presented in the publication reflect estimates for the latest completed financial year, and actual direct costs for the previous year. They are presented as a broad indication of the resources currently allocated to each program and should not be taken as an accurate basis for estimating future allocations – comparisons across programs can therefore be misleading.

Direct costs are those costs which can be linked directly to the production of program outputs. They include the salaries, internally charged computing costs and administrative costs of the organisational units making up the program area. Indirect costs, such as data collection and processing and corporate services provided by centralised support areas are not included.

The 2005–06 figures are actual accrual expenditure for that year. The 2006–07 figures are full year projections based on the agreed budget for the year. Forward year resources are not provided, as budget estimates have not yet been finalised.

For technology services, resources are reflected in aggregate against the Technology Services program. The internal cost to program areas using technology services on a cost recovered basis are also reflected in the program resources.

### Staff usage

Staff usage figures comprise full time staff, and full time equivalent figures for part time staff. Inoperative staff are excluded. Staff usage figures are outcomes for 2005–06.





# Overview of the ABS

## Census and Statistics Act 1905

- Provides the legislative authority to undertake the population census and other statistical collections
- Provides the Statistician with the power to direct a person to supply information
- Requires the ABS to publish the results of its collections
- Imposes strict secrecy provisions on officers of the ABS.

## Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975

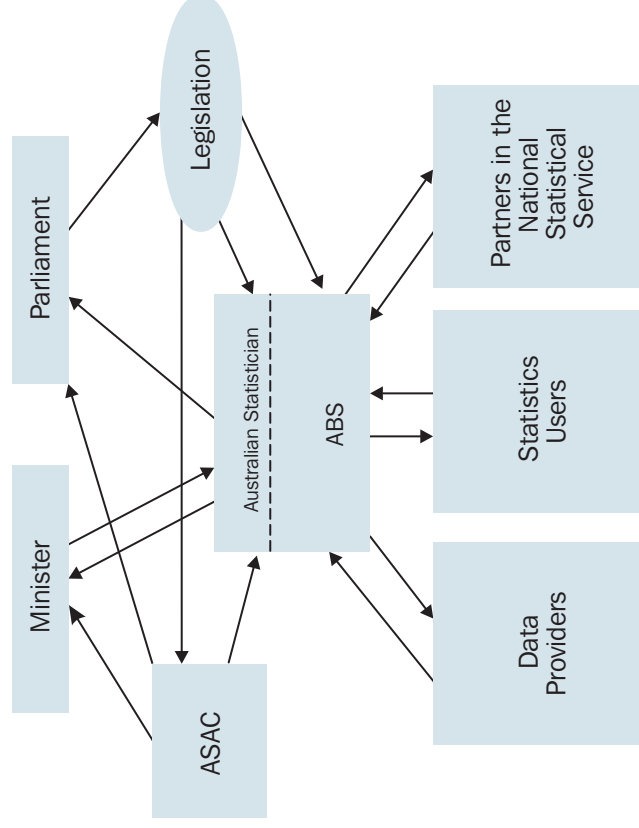
- Established and ensures the independence of both the ABS and the Australian Statistician
- Describes the functions of the ABS
- Requires ABS to advise parliament of proposals for new collections
- Established the Australian Statistics Advisory Council
- Requires ABS and ASAC to report to Parliament each year.

## ABS Functions

- To constitute the central statistical authority for the Australian Government and Governments of the States and Territories
- To collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistics and related information on a wide range of economic, environmental and social matters
- To ensure coordination of the statistical operations of official bodies
- To formulate, and ensure compliance with, statistical standards
- To provide advice and assistance to official bodies in relation to statistics
- To liaise with statistical agencies of other countries and international organisations.

## ABS Mission

**"We assist and encourage informed decision making, research and discussion within governments and the community, by leading a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service"**



## Statistics Users

- Views on statistical activities and priorities gathered by advisory committees, statistics user groups, discussions with government, business and academics, and views invited from the community
- Client management, with bilateral consultation on statistical needs with key users
- Market research into statistics users' requirements.

## Corporate Plan Objectives

- An expanded and improved national statistical service
- ABS services that are timely, relevant, responsive and respected for their integrity and quality
- Informed and increased use of statistics
- A key contributor to international statistical activities that are important to Australia or our region
- An organisation that builds capability to continually improve its effectiveness
- The trust and cooperation of our providers
- ABS is a respected and strongly supported organisation.

## Core Values

- Integrity
- Service
- Professionalism
- Relevance
- Trust of providers
- Access for all.

## Corporate Governance - Key Fora

- Australian Statistics Advisory Council
- Executive Meetings (weekly)
- Senior Management Meetings (6 monthly)
- Audit Committee
- Information Management Resource Committee
- Protective Security Management Committee
- Executive Meetings – Human Resources
- Executive Meetings – Financial Accountability.

## Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC)

Advise the Minister and Statistician on:

- the improvement, extension and coordination of statistical service provided for public purposes in Australia
- annual and longer term priorities and programs of work that should be undertaken by the ABS
- any other matters relating to those statistical services.

# ABS Strategic Management

## Corporate Plan

The ABS Corporate Plan is a key part of the strategic planning process. The plan describes our working environment and outlines our mission and values. It describes the objectives the ABS will pursue to fulfil its mission over the next 3 to 5 years and the strategies we will adopt. It sets out the directions we want the ABS to take to meet our future challenges.

A refreshed version of the ABS Corporate Plan was released in December 2005. The statement of mission, values, objectives and related strategies in the corporate plan provides the higher level frame within which this rolling three-year ABS forward work program has been developed, and future work programs will be developed. It provides the broad context for ensuring we use our resources effectively and efficiently.

The key components of the ABS corporate plan are outlined below. These provide a useful reference for readers in working through the operational objectives and strategies of ABS programs set out on the following pages.

## Mission

We assist and encourage informed decision making, research and discussion within governments and the community, by leading a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service.

## Values

The ABS and its staff uphold the APS Values and Code of Conduct. ABS values, which are congruent with the APS values, are material to our role as an independent provider of information for Australia. Our values are:

- integrity
- service
- professionalism
- relevance
- trust of providers
- access for all.

The ABS values encompass what we believe and shape how we behave. The ABS values its staff and has obligations to them; staff in turn have obligations to the ABS.

## Objectives

To achieve the ABS mission, the ABS has the following objectives:

1. An expanded and improved National Statistical Service
2. ABS services that are timely, relevant, responsive, and respected for their integrity and quality
3. Informed and increased use of statistics
4. A key contributor to international statistical activities that are important to Australia or our region
5. An organisation that builds capability to continually improve its effectiveness
6. The trust and cooperation of our providers
7. ABS is a respected and strongly supported organisation.

## How the ABS Determines Statistical Priorities

The provision of a high quality National Statistical Service is a complex management exercise due to the diverse nature of user requirements and, in most instances, the lead time required to develop or update statistical collections. While the ABS recognises that it is impossible to satisfy all demands, in order to maintain relevance, we seek to react positively and responsibly to the demonstrated needs of its users. At the same time, we are conscious of the constraints on public spending and on the workload placed on providers of information for its collections. Continued effort is made to review and, where possible, reduce provider load.

### How the ABS understands client needs

For the ABS, determining future priorities involves consulting and planning with statistics users. Statistics users are consulted to determine their information needs. These are an input to decisions on the scope, content and frequency of statistical collections.

Consultation takes place through ABS-organised statistics user groups; direct discussion with Australian government, state or local agencies, academics, industry bodies, non-government and community organisations etc.; and the release of information or discussion papers inviting comment.

Consultations cover both needs for data on new or emerging topics, and modifications to existing data collections. Contact with consulted groups continues throughout the statistical cycle to keep them informed on progress and as a check that developments towards statistical outputs remain on track to meet survey objectives.

A list of user groups the ABS organises for consultation on work program decisions is provided in the Appendix.

### How the ABS determines its work program

The ABS mission statement and corporate plan provide the context and high level framework for making decisions on the ABS's forward work program.

Within this framework, the annual ABS planning cycle comprises a structured series of high level meetings and forums where senior managers formally and extensively consider the relative priorities and competing resource requirements of program components. In doing this, particular attention is given to:

- input from user consultations
- the extent to which particular statistical activities continue to be justified in relation to other work for which a demand has been expressed by users
- the contribution statistical activities make to achieving National Statistical Service objectives
- the cost imposed on respondents to collections, in terms of time and effort
- prospective total resources available to the ABS within the three-year period
- the market potential and revenue implications of the various initiatives proposed
- productivity gains which have been achieved or which might be possible in the future
- the relative share of resources spent on statistical and non-statistical work.

Proposals from managers of program components are considered by senior management, generally following consultation with major users.

Aspects of the proposed forward work program and resource estimates that emerge are considered by the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC). The statistical work program is then finalised in the light of ASAC advice.

## How the ABS Operates

### Introduction

The ABS produces and disseminates statistics under four broad programs:

- Macroeconomics and Integration Statistics
- Population, Industry and Environment Statistics
- Social Statistics

These areas of statistics involve extensive data collection through censuses and surveys and from administrative data sources.

The statistical programs are supported by service areas, which deliver assistance and advice on statistical methods, data and metadata arrangements, information technology, client management, dissemination, human resources and other corporate services.

The ABS has a central office in Canberra and regional offices located in the eight state and territory capitals. Regional offices are primarily responsible for the delivery of statistical services to their state or territory. All regional offices, apart from the ACT office, have some responsibilities for national operations for particular statistical activities.

### The statistical collection process

While business and household survey programs are generally run separately, they are characterised by common statistical principles and many similar procedures. The statistical process involves a range of statistical operations, from developing specifications for statistics based on user information needs through to the delivery of data and support to clients.

The diagram below presents a typical survey cycle. It distinguishes between a core set of tasks and activities which form the three broad stages of the statistical collection process, and two overarching functions which ensure that ABS products, processes and services are of high quality and contribute to achieving corporate objectives and delivering on the ABS mission.



### Functional areas undertaking statistical operations

Once statistical priorities have been set, through consultation and planning with statistics users, the ABS sets up arrangements for **data collection, processing and analysis**. Data collection activities include survey dispatch, data receipt and follow-up of non-response. Data may be collected directly from providers through surveys or censuses, or indirectly by accessing data collected by other organisations, particularly Australian, state and territory administrative agencies. The processing stages of the cycle cover data entry; checking individual records for completeness, consistency and accuracy; producing aggregate survey results; checking consistency and validity of aggregated data and preparing data for public release.

The final stage of the statistical cycle covers **data communication and decision support**. A key objective for the ABS is to maximise the informed use of ABS and non-ABS statistics by increasing the visibility of and access to statistics, optimising the mix of dissemination channels, and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of information service delivery. To achieve this, a range of products and delivery options have been developed, with a focus on meeting the needs of ABS clients. Several areas support these activities and range from market research through website publishing and development, a telephone enquiry service, delivery of customised products and working with various sectors to improve statistical literacy. See also the Dissemination and Pricing Policy section.

The statistical operations of each stage of the cycle are undertaken by a range of specialist areas. Other specialist areas have responsibility for ensuring that the broader objectives of managing quality and processes, and delivering statistical leadership, are achieved. The key organisational areas and functions that are involved in the statistical collection are described below.

**National Statistics Centres (NSCs)** provide statistical leadership, internally and externally, for each field of statistics. NSC responsibilities include: establishing and maintaining close links with key external clients and ensuring the ABS understands and satisfies their needs for data; providing leadership in the development of statistics within and outside the ABS; maintaining knowledge of current and emerging policy issues and debates, and assessing potential statistical impacts; understanding and awareness of important national and international statistics relating to these issues; and complex analytical work, which often draws on multiple information sources. NSCs also participate in the development of survey proposals and survey outputs, including dissemination strategies.

**Business Statistics Centres (BSCs)** are the owners of data collected from businesses. The BSCs are responsible for the specification of output requirements to meet user needs and for determining appropriate collection methodologies for their specific subject matter. BSCs undertake more complex editing functions, analysis and preparation of survey-specific commentary and articles. They are the main contact point for data users, to help users interpret survey results for regular releases of ABS statistics in their field. Other responsibilities of BSCs include: data quality assurance, including the specification of data quality requirements to the Economic Statistics Data Centre (ESDC); and the consistent application of existing or new statistical frameworks, classifications, standards and concepts.

For household surveys, **Household Survey Centres (HSCs)** project manage the survey process. HSCs manage consultation with statistics users, develop survey objectives, prepare survey proposals and develop survey content. To support their data collection activities HSCs develop and maintain survey-specific and coding systems. In association with Methodology and Data Management Division (MDMD), they ensure appropriate sample design and collection methodologies are developed. HSCs are responsible for quality assurance of all aspects of the survey. They develop dissemination strategies, manage the delivery of the initial publications and other outputs from each collection, and coordinate evaluation of the survey process.

The **Integrated Collection Branch** aligns the business and data capture processing across economic and social statistics. It comprises the Economic Statistics Data Centre and Population Survey Operations.

The **Economic Statistics Data Centre (ESDC)** is responsible for managing the data collection phase of business surveys. An important aspect of its role is the maintenance of business survey frames - that is, lists of Australian businesses that include details on contacts, structure and type of operations. It is from these frames that selections are made of businesses to participate in ABS surveys. The primary source of frames for economic surveys is the ABS Business Register. Other ESDC functions include: sample selection; questionnaire development and testing; questionnaire dispatch; data collection, including administrative data; basic checks for completeness of responses; non-response follow-up; handling of provider complaints; and key provider management.

The **Population Survey Operations (PSO)** area provides national leadership and direction for the household survey collection operations, with individual state operations managed by ABS

Regional Offices. PSO is responsible for household sample generation and maintenance; interviewer recruitment, training and management; survey interviewing, data capture and coding of data collected; and provision of survey management information and performance reporting. A key PSO responsibility is the preparation of survey frames. Population survey frames are based on the dwellings recorded in the most recent Census of Population and Housing, conducted five-yearly by the ABS.

## Supporting statistical operations

Several programs within the ABS provide the infrastructure necessary for undertaking data collection and producing official statistics. This infrastructure comprises the concepts, classifications, standards, survey methodology and information technology systems which support the statistical process.

**Methodology and Data Management Division (MDMD)** has specific responsibilities for supporting the statistical collection process. MDMD provides advice on survey design, methods and on data quality through all stages of the survey cycle. The Division ensures ABS surveys are based on sound statistical principles and practices and that the statistics produced best meet survey design objectives, while maintaining data confidentiality. MDMD undertakes research on statistical methods to improve the efficiency and accuracy of ABS work, and provides leadership and support in the development, review and application of statistical classifications. Within MDMD, the **National Statistical Services Leadership Branch** undertakes a range of statistical leadership activities aimed at increasing the understanding and use of statistics by government, research organisations and the wider community.

The **Corporate Services Division (CSD)** is responsible for recruitment, development and retention of the workforce needed to deliver the ABS work program; for the provision of leadership in driving cultural change; and for ensuring staff have a healthy, safe and functional working environment. Within CSD, the **Office of the Statistician** is responsible for key corporate functions that support the Australian Statistician's administrative and statistical roles. The Office manages: relationships with key external stakeholders including the Minister, the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) and the media; corporate governance activities including compliance with legislation under which the ABS operates; ABS' international activities; and strategic and work program planning and budget allocation. The functions and responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer are also included in CSD operations.

**Technology Services Division (TSD)** provides ABS staff with stable, reliable, and secure information technology infrastructure, including hardware, software and network facilities. TSD maintains systems to ensure they are efficient, timely and relevant and assists other areas of the ABS to improve efficiency and effectiveness in their use of those systems. They also develop specialised software to support ABS statistical processes. The Division undertakes systems analysis and design, specialist programming services and provide advice on new and developing information technologies.



## Governance and Legislation

### Corporate governance

ABS corporate governance arrangements ensure transparency in decision making, operation and accountability by promoting strong leadership, sound management and effective planning and review processes.

The Office of the Statistician has an important role as a focal point for ABS corporate governance. It supports the effective operation of governance forums, ensures the ABS operates within the scope of its authority and legislative basis, and manages ABS audit, review and risk management activities.

Some of the key ABS corporate governance mechanisms are described below:

- a planning cycle to ensure that the ABS work program reflects current and emerging statistical priorities of users, and is consistent with the ABS mission and overall strategic directions
- senior management committees involved in developing policies and strategies, identifying priorities and monitoring ABS activities
- advisory bodies and user groups to enable the ABS to consult widely with the user community in relation to the ABS work program
- an audit and review program covering different facets of ABS operations and overseen by the Audit Committee
- a risk management framework to assist in identifying and managing risks at organisational, operational and project level
- instructions and manuals to ensure staff can access ABS policies and practices.

### Senior management committees

An important feature of ABS corporate governance is the role played by senior management committees which are active in developing policies and strategies, identifying ABS priorities, ensuring appropriate planning and implementation to address those priorities and effective monitoring of ABS activities.

The major senior management committees are as follows:

- ABS Management Meetings

The Management Meetings play a major role in determining ABS strategic directions, priorities and resource allocations. The Management Meeting is held twice a year, and agrees on the ABS forward work program. Each Division and Group reports annually to the ABS Management Meeting. Management Meetings are attended by the Australian Statistician, Group and Division Heads, and Regional Directors. Presenters and selected observers attend various discussions.

- Division Heads Meetings (DHM)

DHMs are the ABS executive meetings held weekly to address emerging corporate issues. They are attended by the Statistician, the Deputy Statisticians, and the First Assistant Statisticians, with other attendees as required for particular items. Regional Directors provide input to, and receive feedback from, all DHMs via their Central Office line management. Each Assistant Statistician and Regional Director in the ABS reports, on a rolling basis, to the Executive Meeting in respect of their area of functional responsibility.

- Accountability Division Heads Meetings

Accountability Divisions Heads Meetings (Accountability DHMs) provide a forum for reviewing the ABS financial position. They also play an important role in the planning cycle, providing the opportunity for senior managers to discuss work program priorities within the broader budgetary context, and reach agreement on allocation of funds. Accountability DHMs are scheduled four times a year and are chaired by the Australian Statistician. Other members are the usual DHM members and the ABS Chief Financial Officer.

- Human Resources Division Heads Meeting

Human Resources Division Heads Meetings (HR DHMs) were introduced in November 2005. HR DHMs provide a forum for members to actively contribute to strategic directions for human resources and guide human resource management practices to ensure the achievement of ABS goals.

- Members of the HR DHM undertake a governance role in respect to people strategies by:
  - making decisions on key strategic human resource matters
  - providing assistance in determining human resource priorities
  - monitoring progress on significant strategic human resource projects
  - identifying human resource opportunities, issues and risks.

HR DHMs are scheduled twice a year and are chaired by the Australian Statistician. Other members include all usual DHM members, a nominated Regional Director, the Assistant Statistician for Human Resources Branch, the Assistant Statistician for Business Support Branch, and an external member.

### ■ Information Resources Management Committee

The Information Resources Management Committee considers matters of strategic significance concerning data and information management and related policy, and major issues relating to the application of information and communication technology in the ABS. It is chaired by a Deputy Australian Statistician.

### ■ Protective Security Management Committee

The ABS maintains a comprehensive security framework, overseen by a Protective Security Management Committee chaired by a Deputy Australian Statistician. This security framework ensures that both physical and computer security are maintained. The Committee is a key means by which the ABS meets its legal requirement not to divulge identifiable information, and therefore operate with the trust and confidence of data providers.

### ■ Audit Committee

The ABS Audit Committee provides assurance to the Australian Statistician that: a comprehensive control framework is in place and working effectively for all business systems; the operation and management of all ABS systems are adequate to ensure the ABS complies with all its legislative and other obligations; and externally published information generated by these systems is of appropriate quality and conforms with legislative and other obligations. The Committee identifies significant issues of concern or non-compliance. It is chaired by a Deputy Australian Statistician, includes external representation, and meets four times a year.

During 2005–06, a review of the ABS control framework was completed. A paper setting out the legislative framework in which the ABS operates, the types of controls used by the ABS to meet its legislative requirements, and the dimensions in which these controls are applied, was produced.

## Audit and risk management

The ABS Risk Management Framework and Guidelines provide a mechanism for monitoring and identifying shifts in the exposure and the emergence of ‘new’ risks.

ABS senior managers are closely involved in monitoring and managing enterprise risks. These are risks that are strategic in nature and have the potential to significantly impact on the organisation. During 2005–06, the ABS executive reviewed the key enterprise risks to confirm their currency and to plan ongoing treatment strategies.

The Audit Committee sets a work program for reviews drawing on the outcomes of risk assessments, the fraud control plan, and recommendations from ABS managers and the Australian National Audit Office. The work program is undertaken by an external audit contractor and covers compliance and risk management issues. A broader review program, involving internal and external reviewers, looks at other issues of efficiency and effectiveness. The Audit Committee meets four times a year and reports to the executive meetings as appropriate.

At the operational level, a program of facilitated risk management workshops for key areas is undertaken, to ensure that risk assessments for these areas are applied consistently and given priority. These workshops assist program directors in ensuring that risks that have the potential to impact on a program's objectives are appropriately identified and managed.

The management of project risks is largely facilitated through the inclusion of risk management templates in the ABS Project Management Framework. Project managers have the responsibility for identifying and managing risks at the project level.

## Authority and legislation

The principal legislation determining the functions and responsibilities of the ABS is contained in the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* (ABS Act) and the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* (C&S Act).

The functions of the ABS are defined in section 6 of the ABS Act as follows:

- (a) to constitute the central statistical authority for the Australian government and, by arrangements with the governments of the states, provide statistical services for those governments;
- (b) to collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistics and related information;



- (c) to ensure coordination of the operations of official bodies in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics and related information, with particular regard to:
  - (i) the avoidance of duplication in the collection by official bodies of information for statistical purposes;
  - (ii) the attainment of compatibility between, and the integration of, statistics compiled by official bodies; and
  - (iii) the maximum possible utilization, for statistical purposes, of information, and means of collection of information, available to official bodies;
- (d) to formulate, and ensure compliance with, standards for the carrying out by official bodies of operations for statistical purposes;
- (e) to provide advice and assistance to official bodies in relation to statistics; and
- (f) to provide liaison between Australia, on the one hand, and other countries and international organisations, on the other hand, in relation to statistical matters.

The ABS Act also established the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC). The functions of ASAC are to advise the Minister and the Statistician in relation to:

- (a) the improvement, extension and coordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia;
- (b) annual and longer term priorities and programs of work that should be adopted in relation to major aspects of the provision of those statistical services; and
- (c) any other matters relating generally to those statistical services.

All state and territory governments are represented on ASAC. The other Council members are chosen to represent a broad cross-section of perspectives, covering government, business, academic and community interests.

The C&S Act provides the Statistician with the authority to conduct statistical collections and, when necessary, to direct a person to provide statistical information. The Act imposes on the ABS obligations to publish and disseminate compilations and analyses of statistical information, and to maintain the confidentiality of information collected under the Act.

The ABS Act requires that the Statistician prepares, for presentation to parliament, an annual report on the operations of the Bureau. The ABS Act also requires that ASAC prepares, and submits to the Minister for presentation to the parliament, a report relating to the matters connected with the operation of the Act.

Under the *Statistics (Arrangements with States) Act 1956*, Commonwealth and state statistical services have been integrated since 1958 (since 1924 for Tasmania). Although not covered by legislation, similar arrangements apply in both territories. There is regular consultation with state and territory governments on statistical priorities.

## Products and Services

### Statistical releases

ABS releases comprise monthly, quarterly, annual, biennial and less frequent products as well as irregular products. In each year, there are over 780 statistical releases. Several publication titles are released more than once during a year. The full range of products is available through the ABS web site and the National Information Referral Service.

### Electronic products and data services

The ABS' principal means of releasing statistical information is through the ABS web site. The ABS' electronic services include:

- the ABS web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>> which provides free access to the full range of electronic publications and ABS statistics, as well as news, media releases, directories, technical material and information about the ABS
- Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) compiled from ABS surveys are released on CD-ROM for analysis by researchers
- Access to more detailed unit record information than can be made available on CURFs on CD-ROM is provided through the Remote Access Data Laboratory and the ABS Data Laboratory services for secondary analysis of ABS data by researchers whilst ensuring the confidentiality of individual survey respondents
- international trade services which provide detailed, customised trade data on both an ad hoc and regular subscription basis
- database products which combine large volumes of detailed statistical data with navigation and manipulation software, such as CData 2001 which contains 2001 Census data
- a free email notification service providing details of, and access to, ABS daily releases in subject areas nominated by clients
- a Real Simple Syndication (RSS) news feed allowing subscribers to access ABS statistical headlines from their desk top
- a secure e-commerce facility to enable clients to order products in hard copy.

### Information Skills Program (ISP)

The Information Skills Program (ISP) assists and encourages the informed, effective and increased use of ABS information by external clients through high quality and responsive training and other information literacy programs. Under the Library Extension Program (LEP), a program within the ISP, selected ABS paper publications are distributed to over 520 libraries. These include the National Library, state libraries, parliamentary libraries, all university libraries and a number of TAFE and public libraries.

### National Information and Referral Service (NIRS)

The National Information and Referral Service (NIRS) is the main professional entry point to the ABS for basic telephone, email, and facsimile enquiries from clients. The NIRS also provides a referral service to clients, referring inquiries that cannot be met by the NIRS or self-help facilities to other parts of the ABS for servicing. Contact details for NIRS are listed on page 15.

### Information and Statistical Consultancy Services

More detailed statistics than those initially released in publications are available on request. Requests for additional statistical data are met through the Information Consultancy Service which is provided on a fee-for-service basis.

The Statistical Consultancy Service provides assistance to government departments and statutory authorities in areas such as survey design, questionnaire design, sampling techniques and data analysis.

### User funded surveys

The ABS conducts user funded surveys that are consistent with its role as a national statistical agency. Survey results are disseminated widely, not just to the client providing the funding.

### Other services

The ABS provides a number of specialised services to meet the specific needs of clients, including:

- ABS employees who are outposted to other government agencies and are jointly funded by the ABS and the host agency to support strategic engagement between the ABS and those agencies, as well as host funded outpostings on a project basis to provide advice on statistical issues
- seminars and training on statistical issues.

## Dissemination and Pricing Policy

### Policy and principles

The Australian Government Cost Recovery Guidelines stipulate that a basic set of information products and services, which would be funded by the taxpayer, should be provided to the community free of charge as 'public goods' and other information, products and services beyond the basic information set should be cost recovered. Consistent with this policy, the ABS dissemination principles ensure that:

- all users, including the general community, have free and easy access to a basic set of official statistics
- where it is cost effective to do so, the costs of producing and providing information products and services that are additional to the basic set of official statistics are recovered from the users of these additional products.

### Objectives

The objectives of the ABS charging policy are to:

- reduce the need for the general taxpayer to bear those elements of the cost of the statistical service which have a specific and identifiable value to particular users
- rationalise use of ABS products and services
- enable the demand for ABS products and services to be used as an indicator of how well ABS priorities are reflected through demand for its products and services.

### Community service obligation

The ABS fulfils the community service obligation for statistics by:

- including all published ABS information in the basic set, which is available for access on the ABS web site free of charge
- providing a selected set of flagship publications on paper format, free of charge, to all participating libraries of the ABS Library Extension Program
- offering a National Information and Referral Service.

### Approaches to cost recovery

Products in the basic set may be provided in alternative formats on request by the user. Pricing is based on the marginal costs incurred in producing them in these formats, for example, the costs to the ABS to print and despatch a hard copy of materials to users, or access to Confidential Unit Record Files.

For products beyond the basic set, such as customised extraction of data, pricing is based on incremental (or avoidable) costs.

The ABS may also price a limited range of products on a commercial basis. This occurs where such products and services compete, or may compete, with similar products provided by others.

Secondary providers of ABS data are charged a licence fee which is priced to recover the incremental costs of administering these licenses. In addition, they are required to sign a licensing agreement. This arrangement requires them to purchase the data they wish to provide under standard ABS pricing arrangements.

## Top Structure

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Brian Pink

### Deputy Australian Statisticians



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Denis Farrell  
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Susan Linacre  
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Bob McColl  
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Siu-Ming Tam  
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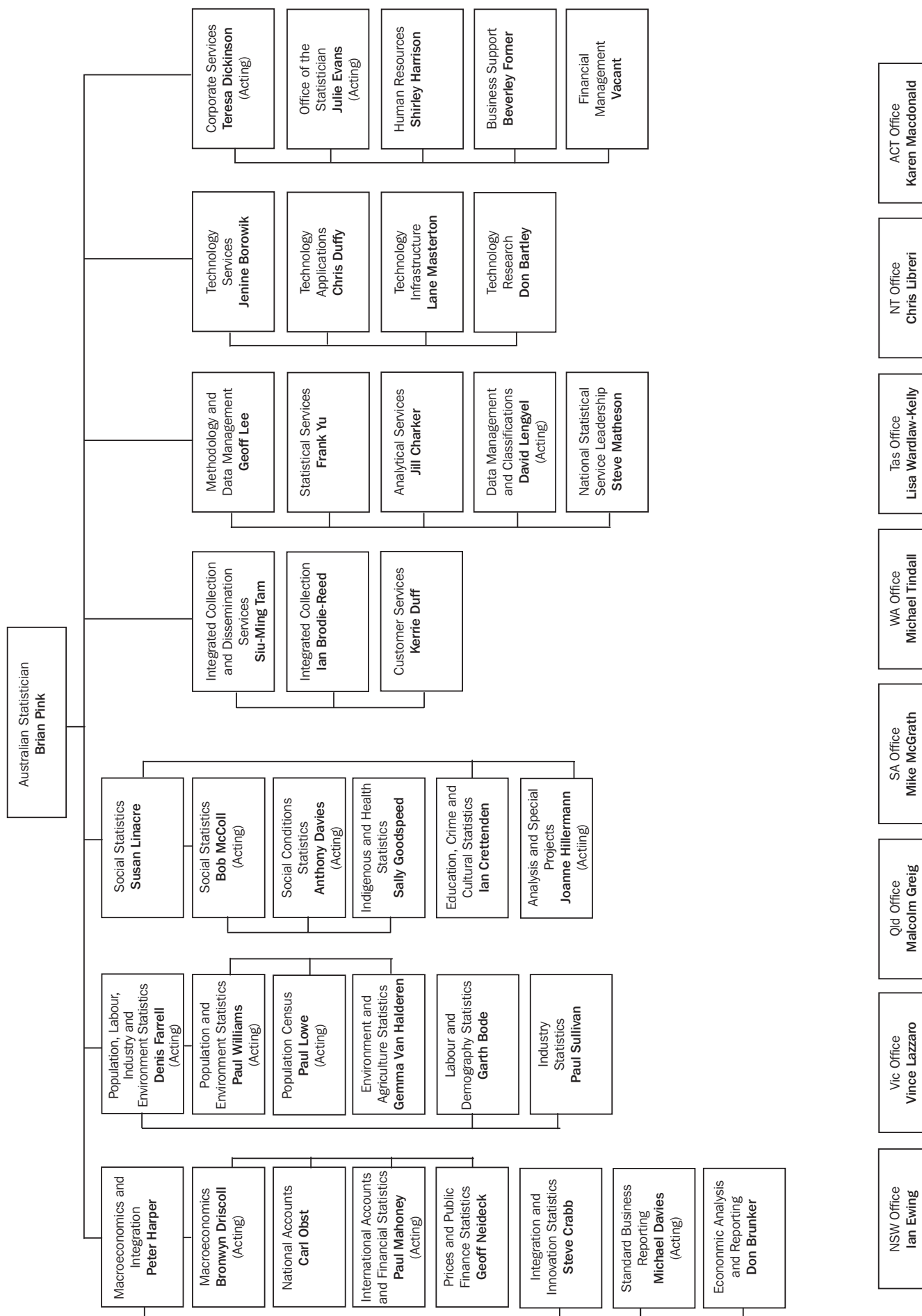
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**ABS FORWARD WORK PROGRAM 2007–08 TO 2009–10**

## Introduction

Each year the ABS work program is established in response to current and emerging statistical priorities of users and in the broader context of the ABS mission and overall strategic directions. This statement of strategic directions therefore presents the broad objectives that the ABS has chosen to pursue, which shape its priorities and work program for the period 2007-08 to 2009-10.

The statistical demands of the government and community are broad ranging and are increasing both in volume and complexity. As Australia's national statistical agency, the ABS has a responsibility to respond to these demands, in the context of its mission and the resources allocated to it.

In this chapter the key drivers of the ABS work program are described, with a summary of key initiatives the ABS will pursue in response to them. More detailed directions and strategies for the next three years are then described in terms of the statistical programs, along with the range of programs and activities which support the production of their statistical outputs.

## Key drivers of the ABS work program

The ABS Corporate Plan describes seven broad objectives which provide the framework for ABS forward work planning:

1. An expanded and improved National Statistical Service (NSS)
2. ABS services that are timely, relevant, responsive and respected for their integrity and quality
3. Informed and increased use of statistics
4. A key contributor to international statistical activities that are important to Australia or our region
5. An organisation that builds capability to continually improve its effectiveness
6. The trust and cooperation of our providers
7. ABS is a respected and strongly supported organisation.

In recent years the ABS has worked to strengthen client engagement and improve responsiveness to their needs, to raise the profile of its externally focussed activities, and to increase the informed use of statistics. The ABS will continue to build and maintain relationships with users and producers of statistics, ultimately to improve the strength and coherence of the National Statistical System (NSS) as a whole. Consistent with these aims, the forward work program for 2007-08 to 2009-10 places a strong emphasis on corporate objectives 1 and 2, and in particular, strategies aimed at progressing the NSS. A key approach for delivering NSS outcomes is the active participation of ABS senior managers in high level engagement across the National Statistical System.

The ABS undertakes ongoing programs of consultation with key stakeholders and clients, which aim to identify and prioritise areas of statistical demand that are currently unmet. In addition, the ABS undertakes environmental scanning, to identify significant changes that may impact on what ABS clients require and how they use statistics. The information gathered in these exercises is used to develop detailed strategies and set internal work program priorities. Recent exercises have identified the following as key drivers of the current ABS forward work program:

- coordinated policy and program delivery initiatives across departments and jurisdictions, driven by primary vehicles such as the Council of Australian Governments (COAG)
- emerging expectations of clients and the community for information producers to allow community-based sharing of expertise, business processes and enabling technology (e.g. for enhancing the usefulness of spatial information from several sources)
- increasing demands by information providers for simplified interactions with government. This is supported by a federal government agenda that is emphasising reductions in 'red tape' and greater information sharing ('create-once, use-many'), by providing access to more convenient, technology-based facilities for providing the data requested
- increasing demands for access to microdata, data relating to particular population groups, longitudinal data and (in the future) linked data within a climate of concerns about individual privacy
- increasing complexity of the Australian economy and society, meaning that production of existing statistics is often commensurately more complex (e.g. issues such as globalisation are placing additional demands on production of economic and social statistics)
- increasing pressure to produce more detailed outputs and improved quality, which must be balanced with the need to maintain stable time series for longitudinal analysis
- increasing plurality of statistical data providers driving a need to ensure that the overall national statistical system is coordinated and that the ABS role in this system is clearly defined

- pressures to improve productivity and to create a staff profile more appropriate to the ABS' future skill needs, in an increasingly tight labour market where attraction and retention issues are presenting significant challenges.

The ABS forward work program for 2007-08 to 2009-10 has been developed in response to these drivers.

### ABS Strategic Directions for 2007-08 to 2009-10

#### 1. An expanded and improved national statistical service

While each statistical program within the ABS produces statistics specific to its subject matter, many of the broad strategic directions are the same. Details of the current key strategic directions across programs are provided below against the ABS' corporate plan objectives.

The ABS will continue to work with stakeholders to develop and support the National Statistical Service (NSS) by jointly identifying and communicating information needs and by supporting agreed strategies to meet identified priorities. The ABS will work across the national statistical system to assist and support the identification, documentation and retention of the most important official statistical data as an enduring national resource, wherever the data may reside. In particular, this will involve building and strengthening relationships with Australian and state/territory government departments and agencies, at a strategic level.

##### Major projects

The ABS has decided to give particular emphasis to the pursuit of the following projects for the start of the triennium.

##### ■ Environment statistics

Australia's system of environment statistics is in need of improvement. Respecting custodianship of existing datasets, the ABS will work in close partnership with others to deliver an enduring system of environment statistics that is relevant; accurate; regular, frequent and timely; easily understood and accessible; and able to be integrated with other data.

##### ■ Population wellbeing

In association with key client agencies, the ABS is well progressed in a consultative process to identify the major gaps in data required to support the policy agenda for population wellbeing. This process is prioritising needs, aims and responsibilities across the national statistical system to provide a more effective body of statistics, from ABS and external sources.

##### ■ Upgrade the availability of regional statistics

Recent advances in managing and reporting data at small geographic levels will be used to support the geographic classification of administrative data sets. The ABS will be focussing on the fundamental issues of getting data (both within the ABS and across the NSS) formatted to best facilitate dissemination of regional statistics, and the effective presentation of these data.

##### ■ Census Data Enhancement

The central feature of the Census Data Enhancement project is the creation of a Statistical Longitudinal Census Dataset (SLCD). This involves combining the information provided in the 2006 Population Census for 5% of the population with information provided in future censuses, using statistical matching techniques rather than exact matches. The project includes using the Census data in combination with a limited number of other selected data sets. These data sets include ABS household surveys, birth and death register, disease register data and information on overseas arrivals and departures. The SLCD will provide a means to identify patterns in pathways of social and economic circumstances, for individuals and households over time.

##### ■ National Data Network

The National Data Network (NDN) is a national platform for acquiring, sharing and integrating data relevant to policy and research. The network provides infrastructure for the controlled and secure distribution of data from custodian to user. It also incorporates services to enhance data quality in production, publishing and use. In July 2007 the NDN will enter its pilot phase, involving collaborations with NSS partners to share data through the NDN on Children and Youth, and to explore opportunities in areas such as Land Information (for Western Australia), and national water resources.

##### ■ Standard Business Reporting

The ABS is working closely with a group of core Australian government agencies, led by Treasury, on the Standard Business Reporting (SBR) project. SBR is a whole of government initiative which aims to standardise business data collection requirements and methods across the Australian government. The project has dual aims of simplifying the interactions with government, and reducing the duplication of data collection and use across government, by providing a single entry point for information providers.

##### Information Development Plans (IDPs)

This work will include collaboration with key agencies in developing, updating and implementing Information Development Plans (IDPs), which identify priorities for improving key statistics required for research and policy analysis by governments and the community. The plans establish shared responsibility between the ABS and other data custodians and major

users for collaborative work to address highest priority data needs. Priorities identified in all existing IDPs are reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.

Work is continuing to develop IDPs for older people and ageing, arts and cultural heritage, rural and regional services, and labour supply. Agreed information development plans for health, including Indigenous health, and for community services, are developed and monitored as joint processes with the relevant cross-jurisdictional bodies in health and community services.

### **User consultations, agreements and strategic relationships**

As noted earlier, having strong relationships with key stakeholders will be crucial to expanding and improving the National Statistical Service. The approaches used to form these relationships will include consulting with users of statistics on their information needs, establishing formal agreements on cooperation for statistical activities, placing strategic liaison officers in key agencies, and looking for opportunities to form strategic partnerships to address information requirements.

The ABS will continue to consult with a broad range of user groups and advisory boards, and will participate in relevant government and industry forums to ensure its forward work program remains relevant. Inter-jurisdictional agreements in sectors such as health, education and criminal justice will provide a focus for information management and coordination of statistical activity in those fields. ABS will continue to work in partnership with the other agencies that are signatories to these agreements to address agreed priorities and promote statistical standards and best practice.

Regular contact will be maintained with stakeholders on key economic and environment statistics outputs and issues, particularly Commonwealth, state and territory Treasuries, the Reserve Bank and the Department of Environment and Water Resources. The ABS will partner other stakeholders in the environment statistics field to develop a comprehensive, accessible and enduring set of environment statistics. Bilateral liaison committees will be maintained to strengthen strategic relationships with partners in the National Statistical Service, such as with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources (DITR). Discussions with stakeholders in the construction industry will seek to determine levels of interest and support for establishment of a Construction Statistics User Advisory Group.

The ABS will continue to support the work of other agencies in developing statistical products and capability. The ABS will provide advice and expertise through membership of steering and working groups associated with the Council of Australian Governments' Review of Government Services Provision and Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage reports; and for key government funded surveys for which other agencies are responsible. These include the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics (HILDA) Survey, the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC), and the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC).

The ABS has worked with a number of agencies to identify key performance indicators in association with the development of COAG's National Reform Agenda. In particular there has been review of data needs in relation to mental health, physical health measures, early childhood, and Indigenous health, particularly for children. Further work is progressing which has increased the focus on human capital, education, and mental health issues.

The ABS will continue its practice of placing strategic liaison officers within key agencies to assist in the development of a shared understanding of Australia's statistical system, and to support development of statistical skills across that system. Placements with Australian government agencies include:

- the Australian Tax Office
- the Commonwealth Grants Commission
- the Productivity Commission

and the Departments of:

- Employment and Workplace Relations
- Education, Science and Training
- Industry, Tourism and Resources
- Health and Ageing
- Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

State placements include:

- NSW Premier's Department
- Department for Victorian Communities
- Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance and the Department of Premier and Cabinet

- Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment
- Victorian Department of Primary Industries
- Victorian Department of Human Services
- State Services Authority (Vic)
- University of Melbourne
- Qld Department of Transport
- WA Department of Industry and Resources
- WA Department of Premier and Cabinet
- WA Department of Housing and Works
- WA Department of the Attorney General
- WA Department of Indigenous Affairs
- Telethon Institute of Child Health Research (WA)
- NT Treasury

In addition, the ABS will look for opportunities to undertake collaborative work with its partners in the NSS, through jointly funded centres, work programs, research projects and publications. Strategic partnerships have been formed to address population wellbeing data requirements. Treasury and the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FACSIA) are key partners in this area. A workshop is planned for 2008. Work will continue to strengthen the relationship between the ABS and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). This work will pursue additional projects, following the successful establishment of the jointly funded Migrant Statistics Unit. The ABS will seek to widen the group of agencies interested in migrant statistics, with the aim of engaging other Australian, state and territory government agencies in strategic relationships. Ongoing units in relation to Crime and Justice, and Education will continue to develop information bases in their respective fields.

### **Improving the statistical value of administrative data**

The ABS will work with other agencies at both the Australian and state/territory level to develop the statistical value of their administrative data holdings, improve data comparability and enhance data access. In particular the ABS will support the availability of regional data through administrative data sources, including the development of products and access mechanisms such as the Regional Statistics Database. Integration across ABS and non ABS statistical collections, as well as administrative systems will also be pursued as opportunities arise.

The ABS will continue to work with jurisdictions' courts and corrections agencies to improve the comparability of, and access to, data in these fields. It will also work with Registrars in the jurisdictions to standardise and quality assure the birth and death information collected. The ABS will also continue to work with the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority and the ATO to develop statistical capability within those agencies, and the potential for expanded use of administrative or jointly collected data, to supplement or replace ABS directly collected data.

### **Statistical standards and methodologies**

Data dictionaries, classifications and other statistical standards for both survey and administrative data are under development, notably in the fields of family, health, crime and justice, education and training, research and development, and transport. These products will extend the range of tools available to improve data comparability across administrative collections and enhance their relatability to survey data.

Work will continue to implement revised international standards for macro-economics, such as the Balance of Payments manual and the System of National Accounts, and updated industry standards such as the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006. The new ANZSCO, the standard classification of occupations, will be implemented in relevant ABS collections. With the introduction of mesh blocks the ABS has decided to review the way it presents statistical data geographically. A proposed new Australian Standard Geographical Classification has been developed with the input of a panel of ABS and non-ABS experts and the various ABS subject matter areas. The ABS is now taking the proposal to wider consultation with government, private enterprise and the community.

Support for the uptake of statistical standards outside the ABS will be provided.

### **2. ABS services that are timely, relevant, responsive and respected for their integrity and quality**

The ABS works closely with key statistics users, through advisory groups and other mechanisms identified above, to understand the purposes for which ABS data are used.

A particular area of focus over the coming year for population statistics is the release of results for the 2006 Census. In the area of economic statistics, results from the 2006 Agricultural Census and the Retail and Wholesale industry surveys will be released in 2007 and early 2008. ABS will also participate in the development and maintenance of economic classifications and standards, including upgraded international standards. Educating and supporting users in their application of these standards will be a key priority.

#### **Increasing use of administrative data**

Further opportunities will be sought for ABS to make use of administrative data for statistical purposes. Wider use of Business Activity Statement data will be investigated, as a supplement to, or replacement for, directly collected data. Plans are in place to increase the amount of relevant administrative by-product data available in the Business Longitudinal Database, and increase utility of existing data sources. The ABS will investigate the potential for collaboration with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) to develop a combined longitudinal dataset of employer/employee information, using ATO data. For population statistics, the possibility of using administrative data to improve the accuracy of population estimates at state and sub-state levels will be explored. The Census Data Enhancement project will also be used to evaluate the quality of death information flows in the period following the census.

#### **Reviewing programs, priorities, products and services**

ABS will work closely with clients to ensure the ongoing relevance of its products and services. The ABS undertakes a major review of its household survey program about every five years, to ensure emerging issues are being adequately addressed and ongoing measurements remain relevant. A review is currently underway across the survey program, and is being supplemented by reviews within specific areas of statistics, with a particular focus on health, Indigenous and crime and justice surveys. In addition, the ABS is participating in a broader review of information gaps in measuring population wellbeing, involving consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders and data custodians. This review is considering strategies to identify and address unmet information needs, taking the full NSS information capability into account.

The ABS will improve its ability to respond to new and changing needs of clients by keeping work program priorities under review. In conjunction with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, the ABS will continue to participate in a review of processes and statistical methods used in measuring international movements and migration. In addition, ABS will look for opportunities to work with other agencies, drawing on their resources and expertise, to improve our ability to respond to needs at short notice.

Development of a Business Longitudinal Database (BLD) is underway. This work is drawing together information on small to medium enterprises from a range of sources, including the ATO, to form a rich data set. As this project progresses, the ABS will consult with users to ascertain the most important information to collect, determine their analytical requirements from the BLD, and where possible develop the tools and functionality required to meet these needs. For financial statistics, recommendations of a review of lending finance publications will be implemented, to enhance content, bring release dates forward and review the frequency of statistics. Analysis of revisions made to key macro-economic indicators will be undertaken.

Across the ABS, opportunities for forming partnerships for the dissemination of analytic content will be taken up as they arise, particularly in relation to Indigenous statistics. To enable ABS to respond to user demand that exceeds ABS budget capacity, a number of user funded surveys are conducted in addition to those funded as core ABS activities.

#### **Enhancing and expanding current ABS statistics**

The ABS is looking to develop its own data sources to expand the amount and usefulness of data available to inform decision making among governments and the community. The Census Data Enhancement project will develop a longitudinal view of the Australian population for statistical studies bringing census data together with key data sources from within the ABS, as well as a limited set of external data sources.

The feasibility of developing community statistics, which will allow existing ABS datasets to be published on a regional basis, will be investigated. The ABS is also looking to expand the range of data available at regional and community level by promoting the use of mesh blocks by agencies holding administrative data sets. New web based dissemination facilities for regional



and community level are also being developed, in conjunction with the 2006 Census output program.

Work is underway on the development of enhanced productivity statistics and an improved range of water accounts. Land parcel and mesh block spatial data methodologies are being implemented for reporting natural resource management at the regional level. Compilation of a spatial price index, to compare price levels between Australian cities, is underway. Mesh block coding of the Business Register will enhance the availability of regional data.

Where changes occur to ABS statistics through the introduction of new standards, concepts and methods, continuity of time series will be maintained to ensure statistics remain consistent and fit for purpose.

The ABS will investigate possibilities for expanding the suite of statistical outputs available as Confidential Unit Record Files, and through the Remote Access Data Laboratory, across the full range of surveys.

Opportunities will be taken to work collaboratively with key stakeholders in the use of microdata, to assist the ABS to make better use of its comprehensive data holdings. The ABS will undertake reviews of data clearance processes and tools, with a continued strong focus on protecting confidentiality.

### **3. Informed and increased use of statistics**

An important ABS objective is to increase the use of statistics for informed decision making. To achieve this outcome, a number of strategies have been developed to assist users to access and understand ABS data.

The ABS will continue to promote the use of its website as the principal dissemination channel for statistics. The website is under continuous review, to improve site accessibility, usability, functionality and reliability. As part of this process the ABS consults widely with users to determine their priorities for improvement, and also engages users to test the upgraded site before wider public release. The website has undergone significant change in the past year to support access to free statistics and further changes are planned to ensure the site can continue to meet user demands for information.

To support informed use of statistics, more information will be provided about the data available from the ABS and on the quality of statistics. ABS will seek to present information in a form that is accessible and well understood by users. Information papers, technical notes and special articles will be produced to explain upcoming changes to data (e.g. changes to classifications, frameworks and standards) and to support use of such data when released. More contextual metadata will be linked to statistical data, to assist users to assess whether statistical data are fit for their specific purposes. The ABS will better promote understanding and awareness of the range of information solutions available from the ABS.

Good statistical data and metadata management practices will be promoted and supported across the National Statistical System. In part, this will be achieved by working closely with NSS partners, such as the ATO where taxation statistics will be made more widely available by dissemination through the National Data Network (NDN). Within the ABS, development of more effective data management systems will enable existing statistics to be used in more innovative ways.

Strategies to improve researcher access to, and use of, confidentialised unit record data for statistical purposes are being developed. Such access includes both on site and remote access and is within the framework of tight privacy management required by the secrecy provisions of the Census and Statistics Act. The ABS will develop strategies to facilitate developments in data integration, which will support the creation of richer data sets from a range of administrative and other sources across the NSS. The ABS will ensure any new strategies or policies comply with the confidentiality provisions of the Census and Statistics Act, to maintain the security of information and the trust of our providers.

The main effort, in terms of responsiveness, will go into ensuring ABS databases are set up in a way that requests for information, particularly more complex requests, can be addressed quickly. This is clearly the case for the Population Census but improvements are needed elsewhere. One important initiative is an Input Data Warehouse for data about businesses. This will enable the ABS to more easily address questions relating to businesses. Work will also be undertaken to develop the web infrastructure required to support access to community statistics.

Another important way of improving responsiveness is to enable statistical users to “self help”. A number of initiatives are targeted at the free data on the ABS website. Additionally, the Table

Builder will enable authorised users to remotely generate their own tables from the 2006 Population Census.

#### **4. A key contributor to international statistical activities that are important to Australia or our region**

The ABS is an active participant in the development of international standards that impact on the Australian statistical system, and international comparability of statistics. This involves operating in close collaboration with international statistical agencies in the development and use of contemporary statistical methods, systems and strategies.

##### **Strengthening statistical systems in the Asia-Pacific Region**

The ABS takes an active role in the international statistical community, supporting activities and providing technical assistance to other countries in our region. Over the next three years, the ABS will contribute to strengthening statistical systems in the Asia-Pacific region by: undertaking statistical consultancies and conducting training courses in other countries; contributing to workshops or seminars arranged by international organisations; hosting study tours and training for international visitors; and by providing documentation on ABS practices and procedures.

The ABS currently has formal arrangements in place with Indonesia, the Pacific Region and Vanuatu. Work will continue under these arrangements to strengthen the capacity of the national statistical offices and other relevant government agencies to effectively measure and report on economic and social issues. The areas where there is most demand for assistance from within Asia-Pacific region are in relation to population censuses, and the population count, labour statistics, measurement of disability, measurement and production of national accounts and related economic indicators, and statistics for main industries.

##### **International statistical standards**

The ABS will play a leadership role in the international statistical community with a focus on the availability of international data and their comparability across countries. Strong links will be maintained through participation in statistical forums conducted by the United Nations Statistical Commission, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and other subject specific international bodies.

This role includes leading international work to update standards such as the Balance of Payments Manual and the System of National Accounts, and the implementation of the International Comparison Project. There is also continuing international work in relation to developing standards for measurement of hours worked, resident population and migration. Work will be undertaken to facilitate international comparisons in areas such as crime rates, health, education, and literacy.

##### **International statistical partnerships**

ABS will collaborate with like organisations to build capability through the exchange of know-how. This relies on close relationships with a number of statistical agencies in developed countries. Bilateral discussions are scheduled with New Zealand and Canada for 2008. The ABS will support staff with opportunities for employment in international agencies or national statistical organisations, on short-term contracts, to provide valuable professional development and exposure to global statistical matters.

#### **5. An organisation that builds capability to continually improve its effectiveness**

Strategies to improve recruitment and workforce planning in the ABS are currently being developed. The ABS human resources program is focusing on providing expert advice to assist areas recruit high quality staff, and do so quickly. This includes development, implementation and evaluation of workforce planning strategies which place the ABS in a better position to compete for the workforce it needs to deliver on its work program. Also included are:

- the identification of, and planning for, future business directions and workforce needs
- continual analysis of workforce data to provide greater knowledge and insight into the current workforce
- development of more effective succession planning, and attraction and retention policies, and
- monitoring and evaluating the success of these strategies.

There will be continuing emphasis on developing the skills of staff. Individual and section learning plans will be progressed and supported by a comprehensive program of statistical training. A high priority is being given to personal coaching programs, and the need to recognise and reward outstanding performance. The ABS is committed to implementing effective performance management strategies and addressing issues raised through staff consultative forums and surveys.

Other strategies being adopted to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of outputs include the development of better integrated end-to-end information technology systems and processes for business and household surveys, better statistical infrastructure, and improved work



practices. Project management techniques and practices are supported and improved through the use of a custom designed project management framework. Internal capability is also being strengthened through restructured work arrangements based on new models for managing surveys and through reengineering methodologies and technologies to improve statistical integration. The new models and processes should improve provider management, increase timeliness for release of core products, and facilitate gains in other quality dimensions.

Effective use of new technology is a key part of systems development work. There will be continuing focus on realising the benefits from computer assisted interviewing, including the use of associated management information to better manage field operations. Work continues to facilitate electronic data collection and transfer, delivering efficiencies by reducing the need for manual data entry. The Technology Services program will continue to guide, educate and support staff in statistical areas to adopt business process improvement tools, and will continue to support adoption of simpler, more integrated and effective technologies.

### **6. The trust and cooperation of our providers**

The ABS ensures provider interests are fully integrated into strategic direction setting, alongside emerging interests of users. As a result, there has been considerable success in recent years in reducing respondent burden, while at the same time significantly expanding the range of statistics available. The changes currently being implemented to the ABS internal structure will contribute to further improvements in provider management.

The work program to progress this objective is substantial and will continue into the future. The program includes:

- continued improvements in respondent management with a focus on reducing reporting burden
- ongoing enhancements to survey design, testing and collection techniques, including further development of e-facilities for data collection, which meet the needs of both respondents and the ABS
- continued review of the ABS' statistical program, and statistical collections across the national statistical system, to address issues of duplication and redundancy in data requests
- ongoing publicity campaigns, to provide information to respondents and the wider community on the uses of, and underlying need for, information requested by the ABS
- review of internal processes to ensure complaints are handled efficiently and effectively.

Most of the reductions in respondent burden in recent years have been achieved through the use of administrative data and through the use of a broad range of smarter statistical methodologies, including methodologies aimed at improving relationships with respondents. Further gains are expected over the three years of this work program, as the full potential of recent initiatives becomes realised. The restructuring of data collection and provider management functions within the ABS has placed responsibility for managing provider burden, for both businesses and households, under one single program. This creates opportunities to more effectively manage and coordinate strategies to reduce provider burden across the full range of ABS surveys.

For businesses, the focus on improving communication will be maintained, to ensure the business community is fully informed about the need for and uses of requested data, and have an awareness of the mutual obligations and assistance available. Effort is also being directed to improving data collection methods. The ABS is working closely with Treasury on the Standard Business Reporting (SBR) project, a whole of government initiative which aims to standardise business data collection requirements and methods across the Australian government. The ABS is working to ensure any additional data collection it undertakes is aligned with SBR goals and processes, and that provider burden is minimised.

For household surveys, the focus remains on ensuring interviewers are well trained in working with respondents to convey the respect the ABS has for their privacy. ABS staff participation in education forums regarding confidentiality policy, practice and processes will be promoted. One particular challenge is managing the reporting load placed on Indigenous communities by a range of agencies. The ABS will work with these agencies to find ways of reducing this load, consistent with satisfying the essential information needs.

### **7. ABS is a respected and strongly supported organisation**

The ABS' reputation as an organisation of high integrity is essential for it to maintain the support of both providers and users of its statistics. ABS aims to strengthen this support through the strategies adopted to meet the objectives mentioned above. The ABS will continue to focus on risk management strategies, through the identification and management of enterprise, statistical and operational risks across the organisation.

The ABS will work to strengthen external relationships, particularly with the media, users of statistics, and the broader community. There will be increasing emphasis on building close relationships with other key stakeholders, including senior staff of other government agencies, and increased emphasis on ensuring relationship outposts are strategic, most particularly in terms of providing outposts which support National Statistical Service priorities.

The policy of high level "picture painting" initial results and compendia releases will continue, and will be targeted at informing the community about key social and economic issues. Indigenous community engagement is targeted at this strategy, as are the community awareness raising activities around the Census and liaison with public libraries.

In an environment of increasing concern over privacy and security, the ABS will implement procedures and policies to ensure: all interactions by its staff outside the ABS are undertaken in a professional manner; stakeholders are engaged in a positive and supportive way through user groups and other forums and opportunities; errors, if any, are dealt with in an open and direct way; and that questions and complaints are dealt with quickly and effectively. In addition, the ABS will work to provide increasingly sophisticated controls to preserve the confidentiality and integrity of data, while allowing users to conduct complex analysis of microdata.

**NATIONAL STATISTICAL SERVICE**

## National Statistical Service Leadership

### Program Manager

Steve Matheson  
Assistant Statistician  
National Statistical Service  
Leadership Branch

### Resources

#### *Direct costs (\$m)*

05/06 1.6

06/07 2.4

#### *Staff usage 2005/06*

11 staff years

### References

*National Data Network*  
[www.nationaldatanetwork.org](http://www.nationaldatanetwork.org)

*National Statistical Service*  
[www.nss.gov.au](http://www.nss.gov.au); select  
Statistical Clearing House  
on the horizontal navigation  
bar

### Objectives

The National Statistical Service Leadership program provides a focal point within the ABS for strategies aimed at strengthening and extending the National Statistical Service (NSS), including the development of whole-of-government statistical policy, strategies and infrastructure.

Within the ABS the program serves as a catalyst, coordinator and evaluator of NSS activities, particularly those which cut across two or more ABS program areas or involve the federal and other jurisdictions.

Externally, the program provides leadership and support to: policy and research professionals through the provision of best practice statistical guides and tools to assist in their statistical activities; and inter-agency committees associated with progressing the NSS.

The program also maintains and develops two key pieces of infrastructure, namely: the Australian Government Statistical Clearing House, which seeks to reduce the load on businesses and to ensure the quality of those business surveys that are run is sufficient to provide the information needed; and the development of the National Data Network (NDN) which provides a distributed library across government of data and related services for use in policy analysis and research.

The principal clients of the National Statistical Service Leadership program are producers and users of statistical information both within the ABS and in other federal, state, territory and local government organisations within Australia. The targeted outcomes of this program are: more and better quality data for policy and research; improved, and more widely available statistical infrastructure and services; and increased capability of producers and users of statistics.

### Outputs

The program has the following outputs:

- policy and strategies for the ongoing development of the NSS
- best practice materials and tools for collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of survey and administrative by-product data
- NSS communication, which includes newsletters, seminars and participation in conferences
- secretariat services to the Australian Government Statistical Forum, StatsNetwork and associated interdepartmental committees
- administration and delivery of the Australian Government Statistical Clearing House service, which provides a detailed assessment, suggestions for improvement, and formal approval of business surveys run by Australian government agencies
- the NDN infrastructure and information resources.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- consult widely across all jurisdictions to formulate a draft statistical policy for Australia – due May 2008
- move the NDN from demonstration phase to pilot phase – to run from July 2007 to June 2008
- support a multi-layered engagement strategy for key clients – ongoing
- improve the NDN infrastructure through the continuous development of capabilities with a particular emphasis on authentication/authorisation/identity management facilities, address coders, geospatial capability, data mining, analysis/presentation tools, and intellectual property management protocols – ongoing
- support the development of a community of producers and users of official statistics and the development of statistical skills and capabilities – ongoing
- promote the development of policy and strategies for the NSS, including specific strategies for ABS program areas in advancing NSS initiatives (e.g. environment, population well-being, regional statistics, Census data enhancement, Standard Business Reporting) – ongoing
- foster the statistical leadership capabilities of all ABS staff through formal training and development opportunities – ongoing.

## **STATISTICAL PROGRAMS**

# National Accounts

## Program Manager

Carl Obst  
Assistant Statistician  
National Accounts  
Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 5.0

06/07 5.5

### Staff usage 2005/06

60 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Economy, then National  
Accounts

Under National Statistics  
select National Accounts

### Other references

*Australian National  
Accounts: Concepts,  
Sources and Methods*  
(cat.no. 5216.0)

## Objectives

The National Accounts program provides quarterly and annual data about the level of economic activity and the structure of the Australian and state economies within a coherent system of concepts and classifications.

The main clients of the program are various Australian government agencies (in particular the Treasury), the Reserve Bank of Australia, state government agencies (in particular state treasuries), international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, economic analysts in the private sector, the media and academics.

National accounts information is used to: formulate and assess government macro-economic policies, both fiscal and monetary; assist in allocating Australian government funds to state governments; formulate industry development policies; undertake financial and business planning; and facilitate international economic comparisons.

## Outputs

The main outputs of the program are the quarterly publications *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (cat. no. 5206.0) and *Australian National Accounts: Financial Accounts* (cat.no. 5232.0); and the annual publication *Australian System of National Accounts* (cat. no. 5204.0). Together these publications provide comprehensive measures of Australia's macroeconomic performance and economic structure.

The key series relate to current price and volume measures of Australia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) broken down into its components. In the quarterly publication, most data are published in seasonally adjusted and trend terms. The publications also show estimates for the national income and capital accounts, and sector accounts such as households and general government. Data on financial transactions, flow of funds and financial balance sheet positions are provided quarterly, and complete balance sheets for all sectors and the nation are compiled annually. The annual publication also includes a range of economic data by industry as well as capital stock and productivity estimates.

Annual estimates of economic growth for each state and territory are published separately in *Australian National Accounts: State Accounts* (cat. no. 5220.0). The program also produces publications containing Input-Output tables and an annual tourism satellite account which highlights the contribution of tourism to the Australian economy.

Publications and articles on special topics are released regularly, recent examples being: *Information Paper: Implementing new estimates of hours worked into the National Accounts* (cat. no. 5204.0.55.003); 'Broader measures of progress other than GDP'; 'Measuring changes in labour costs'; 'Valuing land owned by households'; and 'Impact of the drought on agriculture production'.

The program also provides seminars, training courses and other information to assist economic analysts in understanding and using national accounts statistics.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- complete a broad statement of national accounts data quality including undertaking analysis of revisions to key National Accounts data items – due July 2007
- develop complete quarterly balance sheets and income, capital and financial accounts for all sectors – due July 2008
- complete review of sources and methods to improve the integration of national accounts and financial accounts data – due December 2008
- compile enhanced satellite account for non-profit institutions – due July 2009
- implement the forthcoming update of the international standard – System of National Accounts – due November 2009
- implement the revised industry classification system Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006 – due November 2009.

# International Accounts

## Program Manager

Paul Mahoney  
Acting Assistant Statistician  
International Accounts  
and Financial Statistics  
Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 3.2

06/07 3.6

### Staff usage 2005/06

41 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Economy, then Balance of  
Payments or Foreign  
Investment and Foreign  
Debt

### Other references

*Balance of Payments, and  
International Investment  
Position, Australia:  
Concepts, Sources and  
Methods* (cat. no. 5331.0)

*A Guide to Australian  
Balance of Payments and  
International Investment  
Position Statistics*  
(cat. no. 5362.0.55.001)

## Objectives

The International Accounts program provides statistics on Australia's balance of payments (BOP) and international investment position (IIP). The provision of ongoing information on the activities of non-resident affiliates of Australian enterprises and Australian affiliates of non-resident enterprises is a key development priority. The statistics are compiled from a range of surveys and administrative data sources.

The main users of the BOP, IIP and foreign affiliates data are economic and industry analysts and policy advisers in Australian government agencies (in particular, the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Productivity Commission and the Departments of: Foreign Affairs and Trade; Prime Minister and Cabinet; and Industry, Tourism and Resources), economic analysts in the private sector, academics, the media, international organisations, and currency market dealers.

The data are used to analyse Australia's external performance, evaluate macro-economic policy, analyse trends in income and capital flows, understand patterns of investment into and out of the economy and determine foreign investment policy.

The balance of payments and international investment position are also inputs to the Australian national accounts, providing the external transactions accounts and the external assets and liabilities components of the national balance sheet.

## Outputs

The balance of payments is a statistical statement that summarises the economic transactions of Australia with the rest of the world. The statistics summarise transactions in the current and capital account involving: goods; services; income; and intellectual property. Transfers (offsets to one-sided transactions in the current, capital or financial accounts) are also recorded in the current or capital accounts. In the financial account, transactions in financial claims on, and liabilities to, the rest of the world are reported.

The international investment position is a statement of the value and composition of Australian financial claims on, and liabilities to, the rest of the world. Its reconciliation format integrates the opening and closing investment positions with the transactions flows in the financial account of the balance of payments and with other changes in financial position (price, exchange rate and other volume changes). The currency and maturity of external debt are also presented.

The quarterly *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (cat. no. 5302.0) publication contains a comprehensive set of international accounts statistics including chain volume measures for trade in goods and services and seasonally adjusted data. Summary transactions of goods and services on a balance of payments conceptual basis, and more detailed presentations of exports and imports on a merchandise trade basis, are provided monthly in the publication *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (cat. no. 5368.0). Statistics providing further detail are also available, including by commodity and by major trading and financing countries

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- implement improved sources of data and methodologies for components of current transfers – due October 2007
- review the concepts and methods for compiling ratios of key international accounts aggregates and consult with clients about any recommended changes – due December 2007
- subject to funding, develop a strategy for the collection and compilation of foreign affiliates statistics in consultation with key stakeholders – due June 2008
- review BOP compilation methods with emphasis on migrants' transfers and the allocation of BOP components by country, as part of the rolling program of review – due June 2008
- complete a review of international accounts data quality, identifying components which pose a risk, and improving the conceptual and methodological information available to users – due June 2008
- implement improved sources of data and methodologies for the insurance and government services components of international trade in services – due October 2008
- contribute to the finalisation of new international standards for international and national accounts, the Balance of Payments Manual, Benchmark Definition of Foreign Direct Investment and the System of National Accounts; and develop implementation strategies and inform users of the implications of the new standards – due December 2008
- review and update concepts, sources and methods documentation to reflect the revised international standards – due December 2009
- investigate improved seasonal adjustment techniques in BOP series: ensuring greater coherence between related series; investigating adjustment of additional component series; and reducing revisions by using modelling – ongoing.



# International Trade

## Program Manager

Paul Mahoney  
Acting Assistant Statistician  
International Accounts  
and Financial Statistics  
Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.5

06/07 1.9

### Staff usage 2005/06

26 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Economy, then Foreign  
Trade

### Other references

*International  
Merchandise Trade,  
Australia: Concepts,  
Sources and Methods*  
(cat. no. 5489.0)

*Balance of Payments and  
International Investment  
Position, Australia:  
Concepts, Sources and  
Methods* (cat. no. 5331.0)

## Objectives

The International Trade program provides statistics on Australia's exports and imports of goods and services. Statistics on merchandise (goods) exports and imports are derived from records lodged by exporters and importers with the Australian Customs Service. Statistics on trade in services are derived from the Survey of International Trade in Services, conducted by the ABS, and a range of administrative and other sources.

International trade statistics (with some timing and coverage adjustments made to the merchandise trade figures to put them on a balance of payments basis) are important inputs to Australia's balance of payments and national accounts. Accordingly the ABS International Accounts and National Accounts programs are key clients of the International Trade program.

Key users of the statistics include analysts and policy formulators in Australian government agencies (in particular the Departments of: Foreign Affairs and Trade; and Industry, Tourism and Resources; and the Treasury, Austrade, and the Productivity Commission), state government agencies, analysts in industry associations, and importers and exporters.

International trade statistics are used to monitor the performance of Australia's exports and imports, for formulating and reviewing trade policy, and in trade negotiations. They are also used to evaluate the industry and domestic market implications of Australia's trade activities and to draw international comparisons

## Outputs

The publication *International Merchandise Imports, Australia* (cat. no. 5439.0) provides summary information on Australia's merchandise imports for the latest reference month, on a recorded trade basis. Detailed merchandise import statistics are also made available electronically to clients.

Monthly information on exports and imports of goods and services, on the preferred balance of payments basis, is released in *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (cat. no. 5368.0). Seasonally adjusted and trend estimates are included, with analysis and comments on the monthly results. The publication includes a selection of tables showing merchandise exports and imports data on a recorded trade basis. Detailed merchandise export statistics are also made available electronically to clients. Very detailed merchandise trade data can be obtained from ABS Client Services. More detailed international trade in services data and data by partner country and state are released annually, as data cubes, on a calendar year and financial year basis, via the ABS web site.

Merchandise trade statistics are classified by commodity, country of trading partner, state, industry of origin and broad economic category.

Feature articles explaining and analysing various aspects of international trade data are produced as appropriate and made available on the ABS web site, normally concurrently with the release of a particular monthly issue of *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (cat. no. 5368.0).

The program produces the *Australian Harmonized Export Commodity Classification (AHECC)* (cat. no. 1233.0). Replacement pages are normally issued six monthly. The classification and replacement pages are released electronically via the ABS web site.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- implement Revision 4 of the Standard International Trade Classification – due July 2007
- in consultation with clients and the Australian Customs Service, undertake a strategic review of the merchandise trade program – due November 2007
- subject to user consultation, release an updated article on export and import currencies – due December 2007
- review improved sources of data and methodologies for the insurance and government services components of international trade in services – due June 2008
- review questionnaires and induction program for respondents to the Survey of International Trade in Services to ensure that appropriate resident to non-resident activity is identified and efficiently collected from businesses – due December 2008
- investigate the implications for merchandise trade and international trade in services statistics of new international standards for the Balance of Payments Manual and the System of National Accounts; inform users of the implications of the new standards – due December 2008
- review and update concepts, sources and methods documentation to reflect changes in sources and methodologies and the revised international standards – due December 2009.



## Financial Statistics

### Program Manager

Paul Mahoney  
Acting Assistant Statistician  
International Accounts  
and Financial Statistics  
Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 1.7

06/07 1.5

#### Staff usage 2005/06

15 staff years

### References

#### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Economy, then Finance

### Objectives

The Financial Statistics program compiles statistics on the financial assets, liabilities, borrowing and lending of financial institutions, and on the stocks and flows of finance for the various sectors of the economy. The statistics are sourced from several statistical surveys and administrative data sources.

Financial statistics are important inputs to Australia's financial accounts, and accordingly, the ABS National Accounts program is a key client of the Financial Statistics program.

The external clients of the program include the main financial policy agencies (including the Treasury and the Reserve Bank of Australia), and financial institutions. Industry associations, analysts and state and territory Treasuries are also extensive users of the lending statistics.

The various outputs are used for analysis of monetary policy outcomes, for monitoring the flows in the financial system, and assessment of the financial performance of the various economic sectors or institutions. Housing finance statistics are used as one of the indicators of consumer sentiment and, together with the other lending finance statistics, are used as forward indicators of demand in the economy.

### Outputs

The program produces the quarterly publication *Managed Funds, Australia* (cat. no. 5655.0), which includes statistics for cash management trusts, superannuation funds, life insurance corporations, public unit trusts, common funds, and friendly societies. Information on securitisation trusts is released in the publication *Assets and Liabilities of Australian Securitised, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5232.0.55.001).

The publication *Housing Finance, Australia* (cat. no. 5609.0) includes information on finance commitments for owner occupation and investment housing, as well as balances outstanding on housing finance loans. Finance commitments by banks and other financial institutions are covered, including whether the loans are at fixed or variable rates. *Lending Finance, Australia* (cat. no. 5671.0) provides statistics on commercial, personal and lease finance commitments.

Statistics on the venture capital market are released in the annual *Venture Capital and Later Stage Private Equity, Australia* (cat. no. 5678.0).

The program also compiles the source data for the quarterly publication *Australian National Accounts: Financial Accounts* (cat. no. 5232.0), which is a component of the Australian national accounts.

A range of tailored aggregations of financial statistics are also undertaken to meet the needs of individual clients.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- review the conceptual framework, effectiveness of data collection and data quality of the Venture Capital Survey to ensure that the survey's statistical outputs meet user requirements – due September 2007
- refine the financial statistics work program through review of sources and uses of financial statistics, in consultation with key users and providers – due progressively to June 2008
- in consultation with key users, implement the recommendations of the review of the lending finance publications. In particular, bring forward release dates, enhance content and review frequency of lending finance statistics – due June 2008
- investigate if a joint collection of international and domestic financial data from investment fund managers can improve the coherence of international and national financial statistics – due June 2008
- contribute to the finalisation of new international standards for international and national accounts – the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the Balance of Payments Manual (BPM); inform users of the implications of the new standards – due progressively to December 2008
- plan and implement data collection changes consequent to the SNA and BPM standards changes in liaison with the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority, other providers and major statistical users – due progressively to December 2009
- plan and implement data collection changes arising from the introduction of the updated industry classification ANZSIC 2006, in liaison with the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority – due progressively to December 2009.

## Economy Wide Statistics

### Program Manager

Paul Sullivan  
Assistant Statistician  
Industry Statistics Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.5

06/07 2.5

#### Staff usage 2005/06

24 staff years

### Objectives

The Economy Wide Statistics program is responsible for the provision of annual statistics which measure changes in the operations, structure and performance of all private and public trading enterprises (with the exception of finance and insurance). These statistics are derived from an annual economic activity survey and business taxation data provided by the Australian Taxation Office.

The information is used to provide industry benchmark statistics which monitor the economy in regard to the business cycle, and to support the compilation of the Australian national accounts.

The main clients of the program within the ABS are the National Accounts Branch and the Business Demographics National Statistics Centre. External clients include Australian and state and territory government agencies, industry organisations, financial analysts and academic institutions.

### Outputs

The main outputs of the program are the annual publication *Australian Industry* (cat. no. 8155.0) and related data cubes. These outputs provide national estimates of income, expenses, wages and salaries, operating profit before tax, industry value added, operating businesses, employment, and selected business performance measures (averages, ratios, and profitability percentages) at the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industry Classification (ANZSIC) industry division and subdivision levels. Estimates for several of these variables are also presented by broad categories of business size and for non-employed businesses. State/territory estimates for key variables, as well as four-digit ANZSIC industry estimates at the Australian level, are also included with an experimental status.

Information tailored to specific requirements of users is also available by request on a consultancy basis. These requests typically include finer dissections of industry and/or data items, or information presented by size classifications based on sales or other indicators.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- revise the publication strategy for the Annual Integrated Collection outputs (AIC), putting greater emphasis on improved electronic data release – due September 2007
- implement key design and system changes for the Economic Activity Survey (EAS) for the 2006–07 reference year, so that it becomes the core collection of the AIC providing broad industry financial data for the economy on an annual basis – due November 2007
- review the data collection forms for the AIC with the objective of reducing provider load, simplifying estimation and better integrating the data, by minimising the different form types and the use of tailored forms – due December 2007
- develop, as part of the AIC, a program of industry specific collections for the 2008–09 reference year (and beyond) to provide detailed financial data, product detail and activity type data, as well as alternative industry views of various activities, to meet the highest priority client needs – due April 2008
- develop and implement new stratification benchmarks and sample allocations for the AIC for 2007–08 – due June 2008
- release outputs for the 2006–07 reference year based on the new estimation methodology and the new industry classification (ANZSIC 2006) – due July 2008
- develop and implement appropriate bridging strategies to adjust previous years' outputs to a basis consistent with the 2006–07 outputs – due July 2008
- extend the depth and quality of industry statistics through the use of business taxation and other administrative data, and synthetic estimation and/or modelling techniques as appropriate – due December 2008.

## Business Indicators

### Program Manager

Bronwyn Driscoll  
Acting First Assistant  
Statistician  
Macroeconomics Division

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 3.4

06/07 4.0

#### Staff usage 2005/06

38 staff years

### References

#### Theme pages

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Economy, then Business  
Indicators

Under Themes select  
Industry, then Retail

### Objectives

The Business Indicators program is responsible for the provision of a range of sub-annual main economic indicators. The indicators include:

- monthly statistics of turnover by retail and selected service industries
- quarterly statistics of company profits, inventories, sales and labour costs
- quarterly statistics of actual and expected new capital expenditure
- quarterly statistics of actual and expected mineral and petroleum exploration
- bi-annual statistics of expected mineral and petroleum expenditure.

These data are essential inputs to the compilation of quarterly and annual national accounts and Supply-Use tables.

Other key clients of the program include the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, various state and territory departments, banks, industry associations, and other financial analysts and commentators. These clients use the statistics as partial indicators of the national accounts and as important indicators of economic activity in their own right.

The program is also the data custodian for business taxation data provided by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). These data are essential to ABS business surveys. As such the program has an important role in maintaining the relationship with the ATO and ensuring that the data are used strategically.

### Outputs

The key statistical outputs of the program are the monthly publication *Retail Trade, Australia* (cat. no. 8501.0) and the quarterly publications *Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Australia* (cat. no. 5625.0), *Mineral and Petroleum Exploration, Australia* (cat. no. 8412.0) and *Business Indicators, Australia* (cat. no. 5676.0). The latter provides information on sales, labour costs, company profits and inventories. Each publication contains both national and state level data and estimates in original, seasonally adjusted and trend terms. In addition, the publications cat. nos: 8501.0; 5625.0; and 5676.0; present current price data by industry and, where appropriate, estimates are presented as chain volume measures.

The program also produces more detailed datasets that are available in spreadsheet form via the ABS web site.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- further develop the usefulness of Business Activity Statement (BAS) data by deriving estimates of key BAS items for all units on ABS business survey frames, so as to facilitate wider application of data substitution in ABS statistical series – due December 2007
- investigate the use of BAS data as a supplement to, or substitute for, data directly collected in the Quarterly Business Indicators Survey – due December 2007
- conduct a detailed assessment of the coverage of the Business Income Tax provided to the ABS to identify gaps and negotiate with ATO to have these included in future ABS extracts – due December 2007
- investigate increasing the coverage of the New Capital Expenditure Survey through the use of BAS data, to include non-employing businesses – due March 2008
- develop systems and procedures to introduce the revised industry classification (ANZSIC 2006) for the monthly retail trade, quarterly business indicators, and new capital expenditure statistical outputs – due July 2008
- implement ANZSIC 2006 for the monthly retail trade, quarterly business indicators, and new capital expenditure statistical outputs – due September 2009.

## Public Sector Accounts

### Program Manager

Geoff Neideck  
Assistant Statistician  
Prices and Public Finance  
Statistics Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.4

06/07 2.4

#### Staff usage 2005/06

29 staff years

### References

*Australian System of Government Finance Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (cat. no. 5514.0)

### Objectives

The Public Sector Accounts program provides Government Finance Statistics (GFS) in respect of the Australian government, state and territory governments, their public non-financial corporations and public financial corporations, universities and local governments. The statistics are compiled predominantly from administrative data sources.

GFS are used to monitor the financial performance of governments and to inform on the economic impact of government activities. They are also used to assist in the distribution of Australian government grants to state governments.

The main clients of the program include various Australian government agencies (in particular the Treasury, the Commonwealth Grants Commission, and the Departments of: Finance; Education, Science and Training; and Health and Ageing), state government agencies (in particular state Treasuries), financial market analysts and international agencies. GFS are also an important input to Australia's national accounts.

### Outputs

The project produces a number of GFS publications each year, compiled in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Government Finance Statistics Manual, on the following:

- an operating statement, balance sheet and cash flow statement for all levels of government. Key GFS accruals measures such as the net operating balance, net lending/borrowing, and net worth are provided. A cash-based surplus/deficit is also produced
- statistics which indicate the extent and direction of both government and private expenditure in the field of education
- revenue from taxation of the Australian government, the state governments and local government authorities in Australia.

The main publication is *Government Finance Statistics, Australia* (cat. no. 5512.0) which provides operating statements, balance sheets and cash flow statements for the Australian government, state and territory governments and their public non-financial corporations for the most recent financial year.

A quarterly publication, *Government Finance Statistics, Australia, Quarterly, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5519.0.55.001), provides general government and public non-financial corporations sector aggregates for input to the Australian national accounts.

The other publications produced are *Government Financial Estimates, Australia, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5501.0.55.001) which provides initial budget forecasts compiled by each jurisdiction on a GFS basis, *Taxation Revenue, Australia* (cat. no. 5506.0), and *Government Finance Statistics, Education, Australia, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5518.0.55.001).

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- contribute to the further harmonisation of GFS and accounting standards for the public sector. Assist with the implementation of the new accounting standard AASB 1049 (Financial reporting of General Government Sectors by Governments) – progressively to 2008
- continue to implement the strategies outlined in the paper 'Quality Strategy for GFS in Australia' released by the ABS in 2006 – progressively to 2008
- publish statements of stocks and flows in Australian GFS. First release was for the Commonwealth government in 2006. Other jurisdictions will be released progressively to 2008.

## Program Manager

Geoff Neideck  
Assistant Statistician  
Prices and Public Finance  
Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 10.5

06/07 10.2

### Staff usage 2005/06

140 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Economy, then Prices

### Other references

*Australian Consumer Price Index: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (cat. no. 6461.0)

*A Guide to the Consumer Price Index: 15th Series* (cat. no. 6440.0)

*A Guide to the House Price Index* (cat. no. 6464.0)

*Producer and International Trade Price Indexes: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (cat. no. 6429.0)

*Labour Price Index: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (cat. no. 6351.0.55.001)

## Objectives

The Prices program compiles the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the House Price Indexes (HPI), the Labour Price Index (LPI) which is an annual series comprising a quarterly Wage Price Index (WPI) and an annual non-wage price index, and a range of Producer and International Trade Price Indexes (PPIs and ITPIs). The program promotes, through provision of information papers, seminars and other means, a greater understanding in the community of concepts, methods and uses of price indexes generally.

The main clients for the program's outputs are the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Treasury, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian government and state government agencies whose payments are indexed, economic analysts, and the general business community.

The main uses of the CPI are:

- as a general measure of price inflation for the household sector
- for production of volume estimates of components of the Australian national accounts
- as a basis for indexing pensions, superannuation payments and government taxes and charges
- an input into salary and wage negotiations
- for indexation of government bonds and business contracts.

The main uses of the HPI are:

- as a measure of price changes for established houses and for project homes
- analysis of trends in the housing market
- for production of estimates of the value of the housing stock.

The main uses of the LPI/WPI are:

- as a measure of wage inflation
- to inform wage setting negotiations
- for the indexation of business contracts.

The main uses of the PPIs and ITPIs are:

- for production of volume estimates of components of the Australian national accounts
- as a guide to future inflationary trends
- for indexation of business contracts.

## Outputs

The main program outputs are the following quarterly publications:

- *Consumer Price Index, Australia* (cat. no. 6401.0) provides estimates of changes in the prices of goods and services purchased by metropolitan households. *Average Retail Prices of Selected Items, Eight Capital Cities* (cat. no. 6403.0.55.001) is an ancillary publication which presents average retail prices of selected items for the eight Australian capital cities.
- *House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities* (cat. no. 6416.0) contains estimates of changes in house prices in each of the eight Australian capital cities. Price indexes are presented separately for established houses and for project homes.
- *Producer Price Indexes, Australia* (cat. no. 6427.0) provides estimates of the changes in the prices of goods and services produced and used by businesses, and *International Trade Price Indexes, Australia* (cat. no. 6457.0) provides estimates of changes in the prices of Australia's exports and imports.
- *Labour Price Index, Australia* (cat. no. 6345.0) provides estimates of changes in the average wage and salary costs of employee jobs in the Australian labour market. The September quarter issue each year contains estimates of key non-wage labour costs.

A range of special data services is available on request.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- update the weights in the PPIs for materials used in manufacturing industry, using 2001–02 Input-Output tables – due July 2007
- update ITPIs for the revision to both the Harmonized System and Standard International Trade Classification – due October 2007
- introduce a new index number formula into the PPIs, with equal weighting within the lowest level components – due January 2008
- update the weights in the PPIs by stage of production (SOP), based on 2001–02 Input-Output tables – due April 2008
- better reflect increasingly complex pricing mechanisms (e.g. 'bundling' prices for groups of services) by extending the modelling of representative consumer bill payments – due September 2008
- expand hedonic price indexes to cover laptops/notebooks (CPI and PPI) – due October 2008
- classify the LPI and the PPIs according to Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006 – due February 2009 and October 2009 respectively.



## Program Manager

Garth Bode  
Assistant Statistician  
Labour and Demography  
Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 5.6

06/07 6.9

### Staff usage 2005/06

74 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Labour

## Objectives

The Labour Statistics program provides information about the structure and performance of the labour market. The program produces statistics on labour supply (such as labour force participation, unemployment, employment conditions and broader measures of labour underutilisation); labour demand (such as employment, job vacancies and labour costs); and industrial relations.

Labour statistics are used extensively in the analysis, evaluation, and monitoring of: the economy; the labour market; a wide range of government policies and programs (such as those relating to employment, income support, industrial relations); and population groups of particular concern (such as women, younger persons, older persons, Indigenous people). Statistics on labour costs are also used in compiling the Australian national accounts.

The main clients of the program are Commonwealth government agencies (including the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Commonwealth Grants Commission, and the Departments of: Employment and Workplace Relations; and Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), state and territory government agencies, industry associations, trade unions and academic researchers.

## Outputs

Statistics on labour force participation, employment and unemployment are published monthly in *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0). More detailed labour force information covering age, country of birth, family status, industry, occupation, hours of work and duration of unemployment is released on the ABS web site either monthly or quarterly. Broad measures of labour underutilisation are updated annually. Statistics on particular aspects of the Australian labour market, including labour force experience, working arrangements, forms of employment, labour mobility, underemployment, job search experience, and marginal attachment to the labour force, are published periodically.

The program produces regular statistics on earnings, employee benefits and labour costs. Statistics on average weekly earnings of employees are published quarterly in *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia* (cat. no. 6302.0). Distributional data on employee earnings and hours, data on occupational earnings, and data on award and agreement coverage are available every two years. Data on major labour costs are available six-yearly. Information on the number of employees and total quarterly employee earnings for the public sector (by state and territory, level of government and industry group) are available annually.

Statistics on job vacancies are published quarterly in *Job Vacancies, Australia* (cat. no. 6354.0). Data on industrial disputes, including working days lost, cause of dispute and reason work resumed, are also published quarterly.

The quarterly publication *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (cat. no. 6105.0) brings together a wide range of ABS labour data covering demographic characteristics of the labour force, employment and unemployment, labour underutilisation, earnings and labour costs, industrial relations and job vacancies. It also includes feature articles on current labour market issues.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- develop, select and implement a new sample for the Monthly Population Survey – due November 2007
- develop and implement improved methods for families estimates from the Labour Force Survey – due February 2008
- develop and conduct the Survey of Contract Work – due November 2008
- develop issues-based information development plans covering a range of current labour market issues – due progressively to 2008
- undertake further development of measures of labour underutilisation by producing quarterly series and by including additional population groups – due progressively to 2008
- implement changes to statistical series resulting from the revised conceptual framework for statistics of employee remuneration – due progressively to 2008
- implement revised Industry and Occupation classifications (Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification and Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations) in the Labour Force Survey, and undertake backcasting – due progressively to February 2009
- implement new population benchmarks for the Labour Force Survey and make historical revisions to series, based on revised population estimates following the 2006 Census – due February 2009.

## Program Manager

Paul Sullivan  
Assistant Statistician  
Industry Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 0.3

06/07 0.3

### Staff usage 2005/06

4 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Industry, then Mining

## Objectives

The Mining program provides annual data about the structure, performance and production of the mining, electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries, as well as quarterly data on private sector exploration for minerals and petroleum in Australia.

The main clients of the program include a range of Australian and state government agencies, industry organisations, and financial and academic institutions. Government agencies such as: the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources; the state and territory departments responsible for mining; Geoscience Australia; and the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE), use mining and exploration data in economic analysis, forecasting, the formulation of policies in respect of the various mining industries, the management of the nation's mineral resources, and preparing briefs for the heads of their organisations. ABS mining statistics are also used in a number of ABARE publications.

Industry organisations use mining and exploration data for research and monitoring developments in the mining industry.

Data from this program's collections are also used within the ABS in the production of economy wide statistics and the compilation of the Australian national accounts.

## Outputs

The main outputs of the program include annual data about the structure and performance of the mining industry (including services to mining), electricity supply, gas supply, and water, sewerage and drainage industries. These consist of national estimates of employment, income, labour costs and other expenses, operating profit before tax, capital expenditure, industry value added, and business performance ratios. State/territory estimates are produced for the electricity supply industry and, of key variables, for the mining industry (excluding services to mining). The program also publishes data on the quantity and value of production of minerals based on information provided by state and territory Mines Departments, quarterly data of actual and expected expenditure on mineral and petroleum exploration, and the metres drilled for mineral exploration.

Structural and performance data are presented in the annual publications *Mining Operations, Australia* (cat. no. 8415.0), which also includes the mineral production data; and *Electricity, Gas, Water and Sewerage Operations, Australia* (cat. no. 8226.0). The quarterly publication of exploration data is *Mineral and Petroleum Exploration, Australia* (cat. no. 8412.0). Tailored information is also available on request on a consultancy basis. Summary data, including key performance indicators, for the mining industry are released through the Mining theme page on the ABS web site. Serving as a portal to mining information, this theme page also contains other internal and external sources of data and articles as well as information about ABS statistical collections relating to this industry.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- collect initial data based on the revised industry classification system ANZSIC 2006 – due August 2007
- publish data on a framework that enables more consistent reporting of commodity production and value data supplied by the state and territory departments responsible for mining – due September 2007
- develop mining sustainability indicators – due December 2007
- release outputs for the 2006–07 reference year based on the new estimation methodology and the new industry classification (ANZSIC 2006) – due July 2008
- develop and implement appropriate bridging strategies to adjust previous years outputs to a basis consistent with the 2006–07 outputs – due July 2008.



# Manufacturing

## Program Manager

Paul Sullivan  
Assistant Statistician  
Industry Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.0

06/07 2.1

### Staff usage 2005/06

29 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Industry, then  
Manufacturing Statistics

## Objectives

The Manufacturing program provides statistics on the structure, financial operations, performance and production of the manufacturing industry.

The main clients of the program are Australian government and state government agencies, especially those with industry or business responsibilities. Umbrella industry bodies and individual industry associations are also key clients.

Manufacturing data are used to monitor changes in the performance of manufacturing industries and to analyse potential effects of policy proposals. Numerous business, academic and general clients make use of data for specific manufacturing industries or manufacturing data covering particular states and territories (and regions in census years, currently every fifth year).

The program is a major contributor of data to other ABS programs, in particular the National Accounts program and the Economy Wide Statistics program. It also contributes to international industry statistics issued by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

## Outputs

The main outputs of the program are an extensive range of annual structural and performance data about manufacturing businesses as well as a limited range of quarterly commodity production data. National data include estimates of employment, income, labour costs and other expenses, operating profit before tax, capital expenditure, and industry value added. State and territory data for manufacturing consist of estimates of employment, wages and salaries, sales of goods and services, and industry value added.

Structural and performance data are presented in *Manufacturing Industry, Australia* (cat. no. 8221.0). Corresponding electronic publications for state data (cat. nos 8221.1.55.001 to 8221.6.55.001) are produced every fifth year, when the collection is conducted as a census. Sub-state data are also produced in census years to show regional activity patterns of manufacturing industries. Annual estimates of value of sales of commodities produced by manufacturing businesses are available on request on a consultancy basis, as are finer dissections of industry and/or data items. Some key performance indicators for the industry are released through the Manufacturing statistics theme page on the ABS web site. Serving as a portal to manufacturing information, the theme page also contains other internal and external sources of data and articles, as well as information about ABS statistical collections relating to this industry.

Sub-annual production data are available for a small set of commodities. The program also produces a range of detailed annual and sub-annual data about wine production and sales.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- collect initial data based on the revised industry classification system ANZSIC 2006 – due August 2007
- clearly articulate and understand the information priorities and gaps for the manufacturing industry in readiness for the introduction of an Annual Integrated Collection strategy for ABS annual business surveys – due September 2007
- release outputs for the 2006–07 reference year based on the new estimation methodology and the new industry classification (ANZSIC 2006) – due July 2008
- develop and implement appropriate bridging strategies to adjust previous years outputs to a basis consistent with the 2006–07 outputs – due July 2008
- release outputs from the 2006–07 reference year Manufacturing Census – due December 2008.

# Construction

## Program Manager

Paul Sullivan  
Assistant Statistician  
Industry Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.3

06/07 2.2

### Staff usage 2005/06

31 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Industry, then Building  
and Construction

## Objectives

The Construction program provides regular data on levels of activity in residential building, non-residential building and engineering construction. It also provides periodic statistics on the structure, performance and characteristics of the construction industry.

The main clients of the program are various Australian government agencies (in particular the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources), state government planning agencies, electoral authorities, industry associations, economic researchers, public and private forecasters of building activity, producers of building materials, land developers, major construction businesses and social/urban researchers.

Building and construction statistics are widely used for monitoring and forecasting the effects of economic policy and analysis of the economic cycle, and are an important input to the Australian national accounts. They are also used in the analysis of issues affecting the building and construction industries as well as the finance and investment sector. Building statistics are also used in estimating population change, which is an essential input to regional planning processes and most economic and social models in use in Australia.

## Outputs

The program produces a wide range of outputs. Building approvals statistics, which provide a leading indicator of future building activity, are released in the monthly publication *Building Approvals, Australia* (cat. no. 8731.0). This publication includes statistics on the number of new dwellings approved and the value of both residential and non-residential buildings approved by relevant authorities. More detailed data, including extensive state and sub-state time series, are also released each month via a suite of electronic products.

Other regular outputs on the level of building and engineering construction activity being undertaken are released quarterly. Preliminary estimates for both sectors are released in *Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary* (cat. no. 8755.0). More detailed statistics, including the number of new dwellings commenced, the value of building and engineering work done, and the value of projects commenced and completed are released in *Building Activity, Australia* (cat. no. 8752.0) and *Engineering Construction Activity, Australia* (cat. no. 8762.0).

The program also undertakes and publishes analytical work, on an ad hoc basis, which explores the relationship between building and construction activities, societal changes and general economic conditions and developments.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- review the mix of electronic and hardcopy products output by the program – due October 2007
- investigate the feasibility and implications of electronically collecting data from the administrative systems of large builders included in the Building Activity Survey with the aim of reducing provider load and improving data quality – due December 2007
- introduce the revised industry classification system ANZSIC 2006 – due December 2007
- investigate user interest in establishing a Construction Statistics User Advisory Group – due March 2008
- review the Construction industries survey program, with particular areas of consideration being the integration of the construction industry survey within the suite of annual collections – due June 2008
- adopt new methodologies and technologies for the processing and management of the construction collections, including adoption of the use of the ABS's economic data management and storage facility, the Information Data Warehouse and the ABSest imputation and estimation systems as appropriate for the Building Activity Survey – due December 2008.

# Transport

## Program Manager

Paul Sullivan  
Assistant Statistician  
Industry Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 1.4

06/07 1.4

### Staff usage 2005/06

17 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Industry, then Transport

## Objectives

The Transport program provides statistics about transport related activities particularly relating to the composition and use of the road fleet in Australia. It also produces periodic statistics on the structure, performance and characteristics of the transport industry.

The main clients of the program are various Australian government agencies, in particular: the Department of Transport and Regional Services; the Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics; the Commonwealth Grants Commission; and the Treasury; state and territory government agencies; the National Road Transport Commission as well as industry and academic organisations.

Statistics from the transport collections are used to assist in policy and planning deliberations by governments and transport organisations, particularly in the areas of long term planning, the regulation of road transport operators and for accident exposure and fuel use analysis. Information about the vehicle fleet provides a measure of the stock of vehicles registered for road use at a point in time and supports the study of links between demographic change and vehicle ownership and use. Statistics on new motor vehicle sales provide an economic indicator of consumer confidence.

## Outputs

The regular publications of the program are the monthly major economic indicator, *Sales of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 9314.0.55.001), the annual *Survey of Motor Vehicle Use, Australia* (cat. no. 9208.0) and *Motor Vehicle Census, Australia* (cat. no. 9309.0). In addition irregular publications including *Freight Movements, Australia, Summary, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 9220.0.80.001) and *Rail Freight Movements, Australia, Summary, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 9220.0.55.001) are produced.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- better engage with key clients at multiple levels to establish mutual understanding of our clients' strategic priorities and ABS priority setting processes, and the use of statistical data in decision making – ongoing, but with a measurable improvement in our relationships via the establishment of a Transport Statistics User Group – due December 2007
- review the Transport industries survey program, with particular areas of consideration being the transport industry survey, freight logistics and Survey of Motor Vehicle Use – due December 2007
- improve ABS understanding of transport industry statistics – due December 2007.

## Service Industries

### Program Manager

Paul Sullivan  
Assistant Statistician  
Industry Statistics Branch

### Resources

#### *Direct costs (\$m)*

05/06 2.8

06/07 3.2

#### *Staff usage 2005/06*

35 staff years

### References

#### *Theme page*

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Industry, then Service  
Industries Statistics

### Objectives

The Service Industries program provides detailed information about the operations, performance and structure of Australia's service industries, including the not-for-profit sector, through a comprehensive program of periodic collections and use of non-ABS collected data. Statistics are produced for particular industries and activities in the following sectors of the economy: retail; wholesale; accommodation and food services; transport, postal and warehousing; information media and telecommunications; rental, hiring and real estate services; professional, scientific and technical services; administrative and support services; health care and social assistance; arts; recreation; and personal services.

Collections of selected service industries are undertaken in response to specifically identified user needs. Clients vary from collection to collection, but generally include Australian government and state and territory government departments responsible for industry policy, and the government agencies and industry associations relevant to the particular industry under study. The information provided from these collections is used for industry planning and performance analysis and other government policy issues. The National Accounts program is also a key client of the program.

### Outputs

The program produces a range of outputs, including publications and special data services, each year for selected service industries. These outputs provide information on activities, income, expenses, operating profit before tax, employment and other key statistics for the industries under study.

Outputs for the 2004–05 reference year included pubs, clubs, sport and gambling services.

Outputs for the 2005–06 reference year covered the retail and wholesale industries and tourism marketing expenditure.

Outputs for the 2006–07 reference year covered cafes and restaurants; accommodation; television, film and video production; music and theatre production; and performing arts venues.

Outputs for the 2007–08 reference year will cover pubs, taverns and bars; clubs (hospitality); public libraries; museums; and legal practices.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- investigate the implications of conducting a Transport Industry Survey (or elements thereof) – due July 2007
- publish data based on the revised industry classification system ANZSIC 2006 – due July 2007
- adopt new methodologies and technologies for the processing and management of the Service Industries surveys, including adoption of the full suite of contemporary corporate systems – due October 2007
- examine the possibilities of using alternative industry views to address priority requirements such as the Government's action agenda program – due December 2007
- integrate the rolling industry program within the suite of annual collections – due December 2007.

## Program Manager

Paul Sullivan  
Assistant Statistician  
Industry Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 0.5

06/07 0.5

### Staff usage 2005/06

6 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Industry, then Tourism

### Other references

*Framework for  
Australian Tourism  
Statistics – Electronic  
Delivery*  
(cat. no. 9502.0.55.001)

## Objectives

The Tourism program is responsible for producing regular, timely and coherent data on tourism activities. It also undertakes a coordination and liaison role between tourism statistics users and other areas of the ABS that produce tourism related statistics. Data include the Australian Tourism Satellite Account, overseas arrivals and departures, tourism related exports and imports indicators, Survey of Tourist Accommodation and data collected under the Service Industries program. The program is also responsible for the development and maintenance of tourism frameworks, standards and concepts.

The main clients of the program are: state and territory tourism commissions; the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources; Tourism Australia and Tourism Research Australia; the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism; key tourism industry associations; academic and research groups; and marketing and consultancy bodies.

Tourism data are used to assist in economic analysis and policy formation relating to tourism, to measure the size and structure of tourism related industries, to allocate state government funding to regional areas, and for local government planning and investment. The Survey of Tourist Accommodation data are a major input into the policy and planning activities of government and industry, particularly in relation to tourism activity in regional areas.

## Outputs

The main output of the program is the quarterly publication *Tourist Accommodation, Australia* (cat. no. 8635.0). This publication provides detailed demand and supply data relating to hotels, motels and guest houses with 15 or more rooms, and serviced apartments with 15 or more units (derived from the Survey of Tourist Accommodation). As a result of the Tourism White Paper, the ABS has expanded the survey to include smaller establishments and other accommodation types for the reference periods March quarter 2005 to December quarter 2008.

The program works with the National Accounts program to produce the *Australian National Accounts: Tourism Satellite Account* (cat. no. 5249.0). The production of the account is funded by Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources as part of the Tourism White Paper.

Other outputs of the program relate to research and development work in such areas as tourism statistics frameworks and classifications. The program undertakes a strong coordination role, working in partnership with key clients to ensure the availability of a suite of tourism statistics that meet the broad needs of users.

The program also actively assists in user education relating to *Australian National Accounts: Tourism Satellite Account* (cat. no. 5249.0), *Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia* (cat. no. 3401.0), *Short-term Visitor Arrival Estimates, Australia, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 3401.0.55.001), tourism related services exports and imports indicators in *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (cat. no. 5368.0) and *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (cat. no. 5302.0), and the tourism related outputs issued by the Service Industries program.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- in partnership with Tourism Australia and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, explore tourism statistics, definitions and classifications, and contribute to the evaluation of the Tourism White Paper – due December 2007
- contribute to the UN World Tourism Organisation and other international bodies as they examine statistical definitions and classifications – due June 2008
- review the Australian Standard Classification of Visitor Accommodation to ensure that it reflects the current tourism industry structure and, where relevant and possible, is integrated with international standards – due December 2008.

## Innovation and Technology

### Program Manager

Steve Crabb  
Assistant Statistician  
Integration and  
Innovation Statistics Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.4

06/07 2.2

#### Staff usage 2005/06

29 staff years

### References

#### Theme pages

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Industry, then Innovation,  
Science & Technology

### Objectives

The Innovation and Technology Statistics program provides data to assist the understanding of the impact of research, experimental development, innovation and new technologies on economic and social outcomes. It provides measures of the penetration of selected new technologies, particularly information and communication technology (ICT), within Australia. The program maintains the Innovation Technical Reference Group (established 2003), the Information and Communication Technology Reference Group (established 2004), Biotechnology Statistics User Group (established 2005) and the Research and Development User Reference Group (established 2006).

Clients of the program include:

- Australian government agencies including the Departments of: Communications, Information Technology and the Arts; Education, Science and Training; and Industry, Tourism and Resources, as well as the Productivity Commission and the Australian Government Information Management Office;
- state/territory government departments;
- industry associations, research organisations, universities and businesses.

### Outputs

The program produces a range of statistical outputs, showing:

- production of, and trade in, ICT goods and services within the Australian economy
- use of ICT goods and services within the Australian economy and society
- internet activity conducted through the Australian Internet Service Provider industry
- innovation activities undertaken within the Australian economy
- research and experimental development undertaken by businesses, government, universities and private non-profit organisations
- biotechnology activity undertaken within the Australian economy
- human resources with selected qualifications, and in occupations related to new technologies (in particular ICT).

The program provides input to the development of the ICT satellite account for the Australian national accounts.

The program participates, with national and international statistical agencies, in the review and development of statistical standards and frameworks in relevant fields of statistics. Research papers and discussion papers are prepared and made available via the ABS web site.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- publish results from the 2005–06 survey of Research and Experimental Development for the Business sector – due August 2007
- publish data on regional internet use from the 2006 Population Census – due December 2007
- publish Household Use of Information Technology results from the 2006–07 Multi-purpose Household Survey – due December 2007
- gain final endorsement for the interim information development plan for Innovation and Information and Communication Technology Statistics – due December 2007
- publish data from the 2005–06 Business Use of Information Technology module – due December 2007
- update the Australian Standard Research Classification – due March 2008
- publish results from the 2006 survey of Research and Experimental Development for the Higher Education sector – due May 2008
- publish results from the 2006–07 surveys of Research and Experimental Development for the Business, Government and Private Non-profit sectors – due August 2008
- define the ICT industry in terms of Australian and New Zealand Standard Industry Classification (ANZSIC) 2006 and publish results from the 2006–07 Information and Communication Technology Industry Survey – due August 2008
- publish data from the 2006–07 Innovation module – due October 2008
- in consultation with users, determine the requirements for content in the Business Characteristics survey (including analytical requirements of for the Business Longitudinal Database) in the areas of innovation, use of information technology and other characteristics – due December 2008.



## Business Demographics

### Program Manager

Steve Crabb  
Assistant Statistician  
Integration and  
Innovation Statistics Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 1.4

06/07 1.4

#### Staff usage 2005/06

18 staff years

### References

#### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Economy, then Business  
Demography

### Objectives

The Business Demographics program is responsible for the provision of a range of information about the structure, characteristics and performance of businesses in the Australian economy and conceptual developments regarding business definitions and classifications. This information is part of a consistent framework for all ABS business statistics and includes the development of an Integrated Business Characteristics Strategy. A particular but not exclusive focus of the program is on providing information about small businesses.

Key external clients of the program are Australian and state government agencies and industry associations. A number of these are represented on the ABS Business Longitudinal Database (BLD) External Advisory Group, which advises on the design, content and potential uses of such a database. Development of the BLD commenced in July 2003.

Government policy analysts and academics from tertiary institutions around Australia make extensive use of the previously developed business longitudinal survey database which was established to facilitate analysis of issues relating to the growth and performance of small and medium sized businesses. The data are used mainly to monitor the structure and performance of the business sector; and to assess the need for, and effectiveness of, policies relating to the small and medium business sector. Business counts produced by the program are also important for users in understanding the likely impact of particular policies or events.

### Outputs

The program has recently released *Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits* (cat. no. 8165.0), which harmonises previously separate releases of business counts and entries and exits. This new release provides data of relevance to users interested in understanding businesses which actively trade in goods or services and will be released on an annual basis in future.

The final issue of *Characteristics of Small Business, Australia* (cat. no. 8127.0) was released early in 2007. It will be replaced by a range of thematic outputs sourced from the Census of Population and Housing and a subset of ABS household surveys which collect information of relevance to small business policy-makers.

A range of products from the Business Longitudinal Database are planned for release over the coming years. Firstly, a discussion paper was released which aims to provide a more tangible basis for ongoing feedback from users. Secondly, the results from two pilot analytical projects that make extensive use of administrative by-product data will be released in 2007. As the number of businesses and range of information in the BLD build up in coming years, a range of analytical outputs will be produced. A confidentialised unit record file, which will enable users to undertake their own analyses, will be released in 2008.

These outputs, together with a range of relevant information, will be loaded to the Business Demographics theme page on the ABS Website.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- continue developments on the Business Longitudinal Database. Assisted by feedback from users, the main developments will be: ascertaining the most important characteristics information to collect; developing the most appropriate firm-level performance measures; and developing more sophisticated analytical techniques – ongoing
- increase the amount of relevant administrative by-product data available in the Business Longitudinal Database and increase understanding of the utility of existing data sources – ongoing
- develop concepts, sources and methods for producing regional business statistics. This will include the facility to produce counts of businesses by flexible geographic areas, in part to improve the capacity of the ABS to respond to emergencies such as cyclones and the drought. Secondly, regional income and production statistics will be developed using various administrative data sources – ongoing.



## Program Manager

Anthony Davies  
Acting Assistant Statistician  
Social Conditions  
Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 1.1

06/07 1.2

### Staff usage 2005/06

15 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Personal,  
Family and Household  
Finances

### Other references

*Household Expenditure  
Survey and Survey of  
Income and Housing,  
Australia, 2003–04: User  
Guide* (cat. no. 6503.0)

## Objectives

The Living Conditions Statistics program provides information about the material living conditions of the population within a framework of areas of social concern and population groups. Household income, wealth, expenditure, housing, superannuation and other aspects of material living conditions are central to monitoring material wellbeing. Related areas of measurement and analysis include economic hardship and financial stress which help to provide a wider picture of the material circumstances and living conditions of Australians.

Material wellbeing statistics describe the circumstances and situation of the population and monitor changes in living conditions over time. They are used to support policy development, program delivery and program evaluation of key government agencies involved in social security, taxation, housing, and community and family services. They provide information on needs for, and impacts of, programs and service provision, and can be used to assess areas of unmet need.

The main clients of the program are Australian government agencies (including the Departments of: Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; Health and Ageing; and Employment and Workplace Relations; the Treasury, Centrelink, and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare), state/territory government agencies, academic and research institutions, and social welfare organisations.

## Outputs

Outputs of the program include a range of products from several surveys in the areas of income, wealth, household expenditure, household consumption and superannuation as well as from multi-topic surveys. The product suite includes publications, spreadsheets, data cubes, special tabulations on request, and confidentialised unit record files with varying detail released on CD-ROM, through the ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory or for analysis on-site.

Information on the economic wellbeing of the population derived from the Household Expenditure Survey (HES) and the Survey of Income and Housing (SIH) is first published in *Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: Summary of Results* (cat. no. 6530.0) and in *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (cat. no. 6523.0). Additional information is provided in *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (cat. no. 4130.0.55.001) and *Household Wealth and Wealth Distribution, Australia* (cat. no. 6554.0).

Data from the HES, Input-Output tables and public sector financial accounts are brought together to estimate the incidence of government benefits and taxes for various population groups – results are published in *Government Benefits, Taxes and Household Income, Australia* (cat. no. 6537.0).

Information about the superannuation of Australians derived from the Survey of Employment Arrangements and Superannuation is published in *Superannuation: Coverage and Financial Characteristics, Australia* (cat. no. 6360.0).

Information and analysis about living conditions are also published in a wide variety of omnibus releases, including analysis of the population census as well as survey datasets. Information and analysis about financial stress and financial hardship, derived from surveys, are released both in survey specific products and in omnibus releases.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- publish housing characteristics results from the 2005–06 Survey of Income and Housing – due October 2007
- publish wealth characteristics results from the 2005–06 Survey of Income and Housing – due October 2007
- publish retirement and superannuation results from the 2007 Survey of Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation – due March 2008
- publish a framework and standards for statistics on household income, expenditure and wealth – due October 2008
- publish results from the 2007–08 Survey of Income and Housing – due April 2009
- publish an information development plan for housing statistics – due September 2009.

## Family and Community

### Program Manager

Anthony Davies  
Acting Assistant Statistician  
Social Conditions  
Statistics Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 0.7

06/07 0.6

#### Staff usage 2005/06

8 staff years

### References

#### Theme pages

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Family and  
Community Statistics

Under Themes select  
People, then Social Capital

### Objectives

The Family and Community Statistics program provides information about family and community wellbeing within a framework of areas of social concern and population groups. The program provides statistics from a variety of collections including those based on registration systems (such as for marriages and divorces), the Census of Population and Housing, the monthly population survey (including topics on families and child care), and from surveys of families, time use, volunteering, work and family balance, and social capital. Statistics across a range of issues are provided for women, men, couples, one parent families, carers and other population subgroups.

Family and Community statistics focus on outcomes and status within the population, including the demand for and use of services, and monitor changes over time. They are used to support policy development, program delivery and program evaluation of key government agencies involved in social security, taxation, community, and family services. They provide information on needs for, and impacts of, programs and service provision, and can be used to assess areas of unmet need.

The main clients of the program are Australian government agencies (including the Departments of: Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; Health and Ageing; Employment and Workplace Relations; and the Treasury, Centrelink, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and the Australian Institute of Family Studies), state/territory government agencies, academic and research institutions, and social welfare organisations.

### Outputs

Outputs of the program include statistical development work and a range of products from the Census and from surveys in the areas of family, child care, time use, community engagement and voluntary work. The product suite includes publications, spreadsheets, data cubes, special tabulations on request, and Confidentialised Unit Record Files with varying detail released on CD-ROM, through the ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory or for analysis on-site. Key publications include:

- *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia* (cat. no. 4159.0) which provides a profile of the socioeconomic characteristics of Australia's adult population and presents data on a range of social dimensions of the Australian community
- *Information Paper: Measuring Social Capital – An Australian Framework and Indicators* (cat. no. 1378.0) providing information on the ABS framework of social capital, a discussion of elements of social capital and possible indicators
- information about how men and women spend their time, including their unpaid household and community work, derived from time use surveys and published in *How Australians Use Their Time* (cat. no. 4153.0) and *Unpaid Work and the Australian Economy* (cat. no. 5240.0)
- information about volunteering from voluntary work surveys, published in *Voluntary Work, Australia* (cat. no. 4441.0)
- information about families and their circumstances, available on a recurrent basis from many sources including the Census of Population and Housing, the Labour Force Survey, and specialised publications such as *Family Characteristics, Australia* (cat. no. 4442.0), *Child Care, Australia* (cat. no. 4402.0), *Pregnancy and Employment Transitions, Australia* (cat. no. 4913.0).

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- support the dissemination of results from ABS collections containing family and community data items with a large focus on newly available data – Pregnancy and Employment Transitions, 2006 General Social Survey with new data relating to social capital and voluntary work, 2006 Time Use Survey, and the Family Characteristics and Family Transitions and History Surveys – ongoing throughout 2007 and 2008
- evaluate the viability of using an interview (rather than a diary) based data collection method in an abbreviated instrument to provide updates of broad time use patterns on a more frequent basis – due November 2007
- undertake an analysis of the relationship of social capital items with each other and against indicators of wellbeing – due March 2008
- evaluate emerging data needs and the implications for ABS collections that have a particular focus on family and community issues – Child Care Survey in 2008, and future cycles of the General Social Survey – due June 2008
- develop and publish, in consultation with key stakeholders, a family statistics framework to support ongoing data development activities – due March 2009
- support ongoing national and international efforts to develop standard approaches to measuring family and community related data items including family types, unpaid work (and voluntary work in particular) and community strength related indicators – ongoing.

### Program Manager

Malcolm Greig  
Regional Director  
Queensland Office

### Resources

*Direct costs (\$m)*

05/06 0.3

06/07 0.2

*Staff usage 2005/06*

4 staff years

### References

*Theme page*

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Ageing

### Objectives

Through its Ageing Statistics Program the ABS provides statistical leadership and coordination across the field of ageing statistics with the aim of guiding and influencing statistical activity, both ABS and non-ABS. It includes the development and compilation of statistics from a number of national collections, and analysis and reporting relevant to ageing issues.

The Ageing Statistics Program works closely with relevant Australian government agencies (including the Departments of: Health and Ageing; Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; and Employment and Workplace Relations; the Treasury, and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare), and state/territory departments responsible for issues relating to older persons, to provide well coordinated statistical support on ageing policy development and evaluation in these areas.

### Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- statistical leadership in the ageing field – setting and promoting standard concepts and definitions
- annual publication of progress against data development actions identified in the Information Development Plan (IDP) for this field of statistics
- ensuring ageing issues are taken into account in determining data content and sample design for age-relevant surveys, and ensuring that an ageing dimension is included in the analyses of survey data wherever appropriate
- statistical research and analysis on a range of ageing topics, including compendium products on ageing in Australia
- statistical support for policy initiatives related to ageing
- collaborative relationships with relevant policy agencies in federal and state/territory governments, relevant national forums, and other influential organisations
- keeping abreast of emerging issues in relation to ageing, and actively facilitating statistical responses where appropriate
- provision of subject matter expertise to other areas of the ABS conducting analyses of ageing related data.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- provide leadership in the implementation of data development activities identified within the IDP for ageing – ongoing
- establish an annual review mechanism to monitor, and publish, progress against the data development actions identified in the IDP for this field of statistics – ongoing for the life of the IDP
- undertake analytical projects related to ageing – ongoing
- develop and maintain a working knowledge of statistical information sources, both ABS and non-ABS – ongoing
- coordinate a focus on ageing issues across the ABS, and undertake analytical work collaboratively with other ABS business units – ongoing
- increase standardisation of ageing terminology within the ABS and externally – ongoing.

## Children and Youth

### Program Manager

Anthony Davies  
Acting Assistant Statistician  
Social Conditions Statistics  
Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 .03

06/07 .03

#### Staff usage 2005/06

3 staff years

### References

#### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Children and  
Youth

### Objectives

Through its Children and Youth program the ABS provides statistical leadership and coordination across the field of children and youth statistics with the aim of guiding and influencing statistical activity, both ABS and non-ABS. It includes the development and compilation of statistics from a number of national collections, and analysis and reporting relevant to key children and youth issues.

As part of the coordination role for addressing statistical priorities for emerging issues in the children and youth fields, ABS compiled, in consultation with key stakeholders, *Information Paper: Improving Statistics on Children and Youth – An Information Development Plan* (cat. no. 4907.0), which was released on 8th December 2006. The ABS will convene an annual meeting of the Children and Youth Statistics Advisory Group for the purpose of reviewing progress against the Plan, and to consider the continuing relevance of priority areas and associated data development needs identified in the Plan. Progress updates will be published annually.

The main clients with regard to children and youth statistics are major Australian and state/territory government departments and agencies, several of which are represented on the Children and Youth Statistics Advisory Group. The ABS also participates in several advisory groups for a range of projects relating to children and youth statistics.

### Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- statistical leadership in the children and youth field – setting and promoting standard concepts and definitions
- annual publication of progress against data development actions identified in the Information Development Plan for this field of statistics
- ensuring children and youth issues are taken into account in determining data content and sample design for relevant surveys
- statistical research and analysis on a range of children and youth topics, including for compendium products on children and youth in Australia
- collaborative relationships with relevant policy agencies in Australian and state/territory governments, relevant national forums, and other influential organisations
- providing subject matter expertise to external stakeholders and to other areas of the ABS conducting analyses of children and youth related data.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- publish 2006 Census thematic publications on children and youth – due June 2008
- develop, and draft for publication, the children and youth related aspects of a Family Statistics Framework – due June 2008
- establish an annual review mechanism to monitor and publish progress against the data development actions identified in the Information Development Plan (IDP) for this field of statistics – ongoing for the life of the IDP
- build and maintain collaborative working arrangements with stakeholders in the children and youth field – ongoing
- produce analytical articles on children and youth for the Australian Social Trends publication – ongoing.

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics

## Program Manager

Sally Goodspeed  
Assistant Statistician  
Indigenous and Health  
Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.8

06/07 2.2

### Staff usage 2005/06

37 staff years

## References

Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Indigenous

## Objectives

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics program covers the activities of the ABS National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics (NCATSIS), the development and conduct of ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander surveys and other Indigenous statistics produced by the ABS. NCATSIS has responsibility for leadership and coordination of national statistical activity about Australia's Indigenous peoples, both across the ABS and more broadly. This includes consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and working in collaboration with a broad range of external agencies to achieve relevant and appropriate information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

NCATSIS undertakes analyses of data on selected topics of major social significance in the field and, through written reports, informs users of the outcomes of these analyses. NCATSIS plays a role in data development, and is implementing an Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy to maintain rapport with Indigenous communities and organisations on data collection and use.

The key elements in the program include: the development, conduct and dissemination of results from the six-yearly National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS), and the six-yearly National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS); and the production of Indigenous population estimates following each Census of Population and Housing. Both the NATSISS and the NATSIHS are designed to produce national and state/territory estimates for remote and non-remote areas.

The main clients of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics program are Australian and state government agencies, academic and research institutions, Indigenous communities and organisations.

## Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- publications and other products such as *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey* (cat. no. 4715.0) and *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey* (cat. no. 4714.0). Statistical outputs are also available as special tabulations, and through access to Confidentialised Unit Record Files released through the ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory or in more detail for analysis on-site
- publications and other products from the Census of Population and Housing, such as *Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (cat. no. 4713.0), and from user funded surveys, such as *Housing and Infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities* (cat. no. 4710.0) from the Community Infrastructure Needs Survey
- statistical research and analysis on a range of Indigenous topics, including biennial compendium reports, in particular *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (cat. no. 4704.0) published jointly with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)
- statistical leadership to improve Indigenous statistics on population, mortality, health, housing, community services, education, employment, and law and justice
- provision of subject matter expertise to other areas of the ABS conducting census and survey collections, and analyses of Indigenous data
- coordinating and promoting improvements in Indigenous statistics from administrative collections.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- publish statistics about the distribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait people from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing – due August 2007
- publish statistics on the Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples jointly with the AIHW – due February 2008
- publish statistics on the characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, from the Census and other relevant collections – due March 2008
- develop the 2008 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) in preparation for enumeration – due November 2008
- improve, and report on, the quality of Indigenous status information in key administrative sources – ongoing
- continue to strengthen the Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy to build stronger relationships with Indigenous communities by enhancing Indigenous organisation and community awareness and use of available data, and manage provider load on communities – ongoing
- support work on Indigenous statistics in the broader ABS work program including the updating of Indigenous population estimates, projections and life expectancy, using data from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing – ongoing
- support a wide range of clients in accessing and analysing Indigenous statistics from ABS and administrative collections, including for the reports: Review of Government Services; and Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage – ongoing.



## Program Manager

Sally Goodspeed  
Assistant Statistician  
Indigenous and Health  
Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.2

06/07 2.1

### Staff usage 2005/06

27 staff years

## References

### Theme pages

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Health

Under Themes select  
People, then Disability,  
Ageing and Carers

## Objectives

The Health program provides information about aspects of the health of Australia's population, and about health related services. This includes statistics relating to the health status, mortality, disability, risk factors and other aspects of the population.

Statistics on health and disability describe an important aspect of wellbeing, which can impact on people's capacity to participate in the labour force, and more broadly in the community. Changes in the levels of health measures, such as health conditions, risk factors, and disability, can inform both the development of interventions for prevention and care, and the need for related services over time. These statistics support the policy development, program delivery and evaluation of key government and non-government agencies involved in health, community and family services. They provide information on the impacts of programs and service provision, and can be used to assess areas of unmet need. They are heavily used in research related to health and community issues.

The main clients of the program are Australian government agencies (including the Departments of: Health and Ageing; and Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; Centrelink, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and the Australian Institute of Family Studies), state government agencies, academic and research institutions, and social welfare organisations including those providing health and community services.

## Outputs

Outputs of the program include publications and analytical articles which draw from a range of social surveys and administrative data collections in the areas of health (including causes of death), disability, and carers. Statistical outputs are also available as special tabulations, and through access to Confidentialised Unit Record Files with varying detail released on CD-ROM, through the ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory, or for analysis on-site.

Information on the health status of the population and associated risk factors is presented in *National Health Survey: Summary of Results* (cat. no. 4364.0) and in electronic snapshots which focus on particular conditions, risk factors or population groups. Statistics on the level and causes of mortality are available annually in *Causes of Death, Australia* (cat. no. 3303.0). Data on the activities of, and patients treated in, private hospitals (acute, psychiatric and day hospitals) are published in *Private Hospitals, Australia* (cat. no. 4390.0) annually. Information on the nature and extent of disability and associated needs for care and support, as well as the impact of the caring role on carers, is available in *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings* (cat. no. 4430.0).

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- analyse results from the 'disability – need for assistance' module in the 2006 Census of Population and Housing – from late 2007
- conduct the 2007 Survey of Mental Health and Well being – results from August 2008
- conduct the 2007–08 National Health Survey – results from March 2009
- disseminate further results and analysis from the 2004–05 National Health Survey – ongoing
- provide leadership aimed at harmonising State/Territory health surveys that use computer assisted telephone interviews – ongoing
- provide statistical leadership to address data gaps, including through the development of new collections and improving analysis of mortality data – ongoing.

## Program Manager

Ian Crettenden  
Assistant Statistician  
Education, Crime and  
Cultural Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 1.3

06/07 1.5

### Staff usage 2005/06

17 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Education  
and Training

## Objectives

The Education and Training Statistics program covers the activities of the National Centre for Education and Training Statistics (NCETS) which include the development and compilation of statistics from a number of national administrative collections and the conduct of a number of surveys relevant to the education and training field.

The Education and Training Statistics Information Development Plan released in September 2004, *Information Paper: Measuring Learning in Australia – Plan to Improve the Quality, Coverage and Use of Education and Training Statistics* (cat. no. 4231.0), provides a statement of agreement on current priority information needs, and the strategies that the major stakeholders are implementing to address them. This plan, which is updated annually in order to report progress against key priorities and to identify new and emerging priorities, will be the subject of a three-yearly review in 2007.

Other key elements of the program in this field include the development and conduct of the annual National Schools Statistics collection, and the regular conduct of a number of surveys related to education, training and work, and the work of the National Education and Training Statistics Unit. This Unit, in partnership with other government agencies that have responsibility for education and training policies and programs, promotes greater comparability of information across the various education and training sectors. In addition to these activities, the ABS analyses data and provides feedback and advice to stakeholders on relevant topics and emerging issues.

The main clients of the Education and Training Statistics program are: the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs; the Department of Education, Science and Training; state and territory government departments responsible for education and training; the National Centre for Vocational Education Research; academic and research institutions; and education providers. The ABS receives advice on emerging issues and priorities in education and training from the Education and Training Statistics Advisory Group.

## Outputs

The key outputs of the program are:

- statistics released annually in *Schools, Australia* (cat. no. 4221.0), and *Education and Work, Australia* (cat. no. 6227.0). Less frequent publications include: *Education and Training Experience, Australia* (cat. no. 6278.0); outputs from Adult Literacy Surveys (*Aspects of Literacy* cat. nos 4226.0 and 4228.0); *Education and Training Indicators, Australia* (cat. no. 4230.0); and *Employer Training Expenditure and Practices, Australia* (cat. no. 6362.0)
- a statistical information and dissemination service for education and training statistics; the electronic publication *A Directory of Education and Training Statistics* (cat. no. 1136.0); and the maintenance of an education and training statistics theme page on the ABS web site
- activities aimed at developing and promoting national classifications and standards for education and training statistics, including *Information Paper: Measuring Learning in Australia: Dictionary of Standards for Education and Training Statistics, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4232.0.55.001)
- statistical leadership, including: the production and maintenance of *Information Paper: Measuring Learning in Australia – Plan to Improve the Quality, Coverage and Use of Education and Training Statistics, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4231.0) which was developed by the National Education and Training Statistics Unit, a joint initiative of all state, territory and Australian government education and training departments and the Australian Bureau of Statistics; and the publication of occasional research papers such as *Deriving Measures of Engagement in Secondary Education from the National Schools Statistical Collection* (cat. no. 1351.0.55.016).

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- undertake a review of the Surveys of Education and Training, and Education and Work – due August 2007
- develop and conduct the Survey of Adult Literacy and Life Skills and publish results – due October 2007
- conduct the annual Survey of Education and Work and publish results – due December 2007
- implement the priority actions identified in the review of cat. no. 4231.0 – due December 2007
- develop the Early Years Learning Survey – enumeration due June 2008
- undertake projects for the National Education and Training Statistics Unit Management Board on: quality statistics on early childhood education; the development of a suite of measures of education and training participation, engagement and attainment; undertaking a feasibility study to establish a statistical data warehouse; expanding the National Schools Statistics Collection – ongoing
- further develop cat. no. 4232.0.55.001, undertake comparisons with the major sectoral collections, and assess the need for development of new standards for other variables – ongoing.



## Crime and Justice

### Program Manager

Ian Crettenden  
Assistant Statistician  
Education, Crime and  
Cultural Statistics Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 1.8

06/07 1.6

#### Staff usage 2005/06

23 staff years

### References

#### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Crime and  
Justice

### Objectives

The Crime and Justice Statistics program leads national statistical activity aimed at developing and improving the information available in crime and justice. The National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics (NCCJS) comprises three independent user-funded statistical units: the National Crime Statistics Unit; the National Criminal Courts Statistics Unit; and the National Corrective Services Statistics Unit. These units compile and publish national statistics on recorded crime, courts and corrections, and work to improve the quality of these collections in cooperation with statistical practitioners in the jurisdictions. Boards of Management oversee the work of each of the units. Board Members include jurisdictional representatives responsible for police services, courts administration and corrective services.

An additional component of the NCCJS work program is aimed at progressing broader crime and justice statistical issues identified within the Information Paper: *National Information Development Plan for Crime and Justice (NIDP)* (cat. no. 4520.0). This presents the results of consultation with a wide range of stakeholders together with agreed priorities and a plan of action for the development of crime and justice information by agencies working in this field.

The ABS also oversees a survey program in the field of crime and justice statistics. Data from the 2005 Personal Safety Survey (PSS) and the 2005 National Crime and Safety Survey (NCSS) were released in 2006. The ABS is working jointly with other agencies to review the national program of surveys. Consultation with data users in 2006 has identified the need to produce more timely indicators of crime victimisation and safety, as well as more detailed information on a less frequent basis. Based on this feedback a new model for future ABS crime and safety surveys is under consideration.

The main clients of this program include the Australian Attorney-General's Department and the state and territory agencies responsible for police services, courts administration and corrective services. The Council of Australian Governments 'Report on Government Services' makes extensive use of ABS crime and justice data in its performance management review process. Agencies responsible for criminal justice research and policy are also significant users of program outputs.

### Outputs

The main outputs of the program are national statistical publications, based on data sourced from state and territory administrative systems in the police, courts and corrective services sectors. Indicators of the level and nature of recorded crime victimisation in Australia are presented annually in *Recorded Crime – Victims, Australia* (cat. no. 4510.0). Characteristics of defendants, including information on their offences and sentences are available annually in *Criminal Courts, Australia* (cat. no. 4513.0). Information from the National Prisoner Census about persons held in adult prisons, including their characteristics, sentence lengths and offences for which they are imprisoned is published annually in *Prisoners in Australia* (cat. no. 4517.0). The quarterly *Corrective Services, Australia* (cat. no. 4512.0) presents information on numbers and rates of persons in custody and those serving community-based corrections orders.

Outputs from statistical activities to develop and promote national standards for crime and justice statistics include data dictionaries, guidelines and other information and training made available to jurisdictions to guide the collection and preparation of statistical information. A statistical information and dissemination service for crime and justice data is also provided.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- produce and publish experimental Recorded Crime Offender Based statistics which will include details of persons (10 years and over) who come to the attention of police and the actions taken by police – due September 2007
- finalise an update of the Australian Standard Offence Classification – due December 2007
- implement a new model for the collection of national crime victimisation survey data – due December 2007
- expand the Criminal Courts collection to include national data on Children's Courts – due January 2008
- implement a national crime recording standard to improve the quality of national recorded crime statistics – due June 2008
- promote outputs from the 2005 National Crime and Safety Survey (released April 2006) and 2005 Personal Safety Survey (released August 2006) – ongoing
- in collaboration with data providers, improve the range, quality and availability of data collected through administrative systems in police, courts and corrective services sectors in accordance with the priority actions identified in *Information Paper: National Information Development Plan for Crime and Justice (NIDP)* (cat. no. 4520.0) – ongoing.

## Culture and Recreation

### Program Manager

Ian Crettenden  
Assistant Statistician  
Education, Crime and  
Cultural Statistics Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 0.7

06/07 0.7

#### Staff usage 2005/06

9 staff years

### References

#### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Culture and  
Recreation

### Objectives

The Culture and Recreation Statistics program covers the activities of the ABS National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics (NCCRS). The NCCRS has responsibility for the leadership and coordination of national statistical activity in the fields of culture, sport and leisure. Its activities include understanding current and emerging policy issues and debates and determining what statistics might be appropriate to inform decision making. It also provides expertise within the ABS regarding the collection of relevant data, as well as informing governments and the community about culture, sport and leisure statistics, relevant classifications and standards, and appropriate data analysis.

The main clients of the NCCRS are the Cultural Ministers' Council, the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, Australian government agencies (including the sport and culture areas of the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, the Australia Council and the Australian Sports Commission), state and territory government departments (in both the culture and sport sectors), and some specific industry bodies. The outputs produced by the NCCRS are used by clients in various decision making forums, including the formulation and evaluation of strategic plans, policies and programs.

### Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- statistical activities aimed at developing and promoting national standards – such as frameworks, classifications and definitions – for culture and recreation statistics (for example, the *Australian Culture and Leisure Classifications* (cat. no. 4902.0))
- leading the development, coordination and specification of statistical data needs through the preparation of Information Development Plans (IDPs); ongoing liaison with data users regarding their needs; reviewing strategic directions; and advice on client research projects
- a statistical information and dissemination service for culture, sport and leisure data, including the provision of publications and reports using data from ABS collections; maintenance of a data directory for culture and leisure statistics with information relating to ABS and non-ABS data; a culture and recreation theme page on the ABS web site; and production of a regular newsletter
- a statistical service responsible for developing data collections, analysing data and releasing data on: government funding for cultural activities; participation in cultural and leisure activities by adults and children; attendance at culture and sport venues; and paid and unpaid work in the culture and sport sectors
- compendium publications on culture and on sport and recreation which provide statistical summaries of all available data
- the provision of advice to clients, including inter-agency statistical working groups involved in the culture and sport sectors.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- update the Australian Culture and Leisure Classifications, taking into account changes to standard industry and occupation classifications – due December 2007
- progress the development of an IDP for cultural heritage and arts – due December 2007
- undertake analytical projects relating to sport participation, sport attendance and culture attendance, with particular emphasis on exploring the barriers and motivators of participation – due December 2007
- analyse and report on the role played by volunteers in supporting recreational and cultural activities – due June 2008
- initiate projects to explore the potential for non-ABS data sources to be used to improve the national statistical service (e.g. data from major cultural institutions; and use of Economic Activity Survey/Tax data for culture and leisure industries) – ongoing
- continue to analyse culture and sport data from various ABS household surveys, including: the General Social Survey; Children's Participation in Culture and Leisure Activities; and Work in Selected Culture and Leisure activities – ongoing
- increase standardisation of culture and sport statistical sources, by leading the development of relevant standards (e.g. a conceptual model for defining sport and physical activity) – ongoing
- improve the dissemination of information through the theme page on the ABS web site, and other appropriate avenues, such as through client networks, conferences, seminars and workshops – ongoing.

# Migrants

## Program Manager

Ian Crettenden  
Assistant Statistician  
Education, Crime and  
Cultural Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 0.3

06/07 0.5

### Staff usage 2005/06

3 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then Migrant &  
Ethnicity

## Objectives

The migrant statistics program covers the activities of the ABS National Migrant Statistics Unit (NMSU) as well as the development and compilation of a range of survey and administrative data outputs relevant to migrants. Activities include understanding current and emerging policy issues and debates, and determining what statistics might be appropriate to inform decision making relevant to migrants and diverse ethnic groups. It also provides expertise within the ABS regarding the collection of relevant data, as well as informing governments and the community about migrant and ethnicity statistics, relevant classifications and standards, and appropriate data analysis.

The major stakeholders of the program are the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, and the various government agencies providing services to migrant and ethnic groups, including state and territory governments.

## Outputs

Major program outputs include:

- statistical activities aimed at developing and promoting national standards such as frameworks, classifications and definitions
- statistics released in *Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Migrants, Australia* (cat. no. 6250.0)
- the coordination and specification of statistical data needs through consultation with data users and establishing statistical developments to meet those needs
- a statistical information and dissemination service for migrant and ethnicity data, including the provision of publications and reports using data from ABS collections; maintenance of a guide to migrant statistics with information relating to ABS and non-ABS data; a migrant and ethnicity theme page on the ABS web site; and production of a regular newsletter
- analysis of data from ABS and other sources to provide a more comprehensive picture of migrants
- coordination of ABS activity to ensure that issues relevant to migrants are taken into account in statistical development activities.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- develop a Guide to Migrant Statistics which will provide potential users of migrant and ethnicity related data with summary information about available and relevant data sources – due July 2007.
- conduct research on Well-being Indicators for Diversity. This project aims to identify and develop a set of indicators to measure outcomes relevant to Australia's cultural diversity and settlement policies. Indicators will be assessed for all Australians as well as for diverse sub-populations, such as ethnically and linguistically diverse population subgroups, and settling migrants of different kinds. Produce project report – due July 2007
- develop a Migrant Data Matrix to provide users with easier access to data contained within existing ABS collections that contain migrant and ethnicity related data items (e.g. country of birth, year of arrival, English proficiency) – due August 2007.
- develop a new publication Perspectives on Migrants containing articles relevant to migrant issues, and ethnicity. First publication release – due September 2007
- undertake a Census Data Enhancement (CDE) Quality Study. Under strict data security arrangements, this study will test linkages of data from the 2006 Census and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's administrative data. If a good quality of linkages can be achieved the project may lead to statistical matching to create a secure data file for the ABS to better analyse migrant settlement outcomes – due May 2008.

## Social Analysis and Reporting

### Program Manager

Joanne Hillermann  
Acting Assistant Statistician  
Analysis and Special Projects  
Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 1.1

06/07 1.1

#### Staff usage 2005/06

14 staff years

### Objectives

The Social Analysis and Reporting program informs the government and the community of social conditions and progress in Australia. It draws together data and analysis both from within the ABS and from a range of other sources, and produces reports covering a wide range of issues. These reports contain up to date statistics and incorporate commentary about, and explanation of, the statistics. The reports include analysis of current circumstances, how circumstances have changed over time, how different groups of people have been affected, and how various factors may have accounted for observed trends.

The reports provide information on the wellbeing of the population, the extent of need and disadvantage in society, contemporary social issues, the interrelationships between economic, social and environmental aspects of life, and whether life in Australia is getting better.

The program is also responsible for providing leadership and coordination relating to the conceptual organisation of social statistics including the overall social statistics framework and related conceptual models. The framework's two primary dimensions – areas of social concern and population groups – are central to ABS social statistics collection and reporting activity.

### Outputs

The main outputs of the program are reports which take a cross-cutting approach and bring together information on the situation of Australians across a range of areas of concern and for a variety of population groups of interest. The reports describe aspects of Australian life and how these are changing over time. The key publications are:

- *Australian Social Trends* (cat. no. 4102.0) – an annual flagship publication that contains articles on contemporary social issues and a range of social indicators covering major areas of social concern (such as health, work, and family and community).
- *Measures of Australia's Progress* (cat. no. 1370.0), a biennial publication, and *Measures of Australia's Progress: Summary Indicators, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 1383.0.55.001), an annual web-based product, present a national summary of many of the key areas of economic, social and environmental progress, and discuss how they are linked with one another.

Seminars based on *Australian Social Trends* (cat. no. 4102.0) and *Measures of Australia's Progress* (cat. no. 1370.0) are conducted for external clients nationally.

The publication *Measuring Wellbeing: Frameworks for Australian Social Statistics* (cat. no. 4160.0) describes the conceptual frameworks underpinning ABS work in social statistics within each area of social concern.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- continue the annual publication *Australian Social Trends* (cat. no. 4102.0), ensuring that the articles and social indicators reflect current and emerging social concerns – ongoing
- review content to ensure relevance and publish *Measures of Australia's Progress* (cat. no. 1370.0) on a regular basis (next release planned for 2008), and *Measures of Australia's Progress: Summary Indicators, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 1383.0.55.001) annually – ongoing
- present seminars on *Australian Social Trends* (cat. no. 4102.0) and *Measures of Australia's Progress* (cat. no. 1370.0) in alternate years – ongoing.

# Census of Population and Housing

## Program Manager

Paul Lowe  
Acting Assistant Statistician  
Population Census Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 54.3

06/07 135.8

### Staff usage 2005/06

243 staff years

## References

At [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au), select Census on the horizontal navigation bar

## Objectives

The Census program conducts a five-yearly census of population and housing. Its aims are to accurately and efficiently measure the number and key characteristics of people in Australia on census night to provide a reliable basis for the estimation of the population of each state and territory, and to provide timely, high quality and relevant five-yearly benchmark data within areas of social concern (for example, housing, education, labour force) for small geographic areas and for small population groups.

Census data are used extensively by all levels of government for planning, administration, and policy development and monitoring. Population estimates based on the Census are used to determine the number of seats allocated to each state and territory in the House of Representatives and as part of the information set used for the allocation of Australian government grants to state, territory and local governments.

Community groups use census data to plan for their communities and in applications for government assistance. Businesses use census data for business location purposes and understanding their markets.

## Outputs

Results of the 2006 census will be available via Internet products, complemented by printed publications, CD ROM products and customised services.

### Internet

- Quickstats: Key census data, for persons, families and dwellings, for all geographic levels from Collection District (CD) through to Australia as a whole.
- Community Profiles: A series of tables containing key census characteristics for persons, families and dwellings covering most census topics. Profiles are available for all geographic levels from CD through to Australia, and include Basic Community, Place of enumeration, Expanded, Working Population, Time Series, and Indigenous.
- QuickMaps: Thematically mapped census statistics available for larger geographies and depicting selected population, ethnicity, education, family, income, labour force and dwelling characteristics.
- CData Online: User-defined tables for single CDs or Australia, with more freedom to select and combine variables, and capacity for basic manipulation.
- Table Builder: User-defined tables with the complete range of person, family and dwelling classifications available, and capability to graph and thematically map results. Table Builder will be available via the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) portal and data will be confidentialised.
- Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas 2006 (SEIFA 2006): A series of indexes to allow ranking of regions/areas by level of social and economic wellbeing, produced in collaboration with Methodology Division.

### Printed Publications

- The Statisticians Report will contain key census information in tables, graphs and thematic maps, with analytical commentary about the statistics presented.
- The 2006 Social Atlases series will map key census characteristic for capital cities and selected regional centres.

### CD ROM products

- The 2006 Census Sample File is a comprehensive Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) containing a 1% random sample of private households, families and associated persons, along with a small random sample of persons in non-private dwellings, available on CD ROM. An expanded 5% sample CURF will be available from the RADL portal.

### Customised Data Services

- Where users' specialised information needs cannot be met by standard products, customised data services are available through ABS Information Consultancy.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- first release data from 2006 Census – due June 2007
- second release data from 2006 Census – due October 2007
- determine collection strategy for 2011 Census – due December 2007
- release Socio-economic indicators for areas (SEIFA) – due March 2008
- release 2006 Census Statistician's Report – due May 2008
- commence user consultation on nature and content of 2011 Census – due June 2008.



## Environment and Energy

### Program Manager

Gemma Van Halderen  
Assistant Statistician  
Environment and  
Agriculture Statistics Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.5

06/07 2.8

#### Staff usage 2005/06

32 staff years

### References

#### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Environment and Energy,  
then Environment

### Objectives

The ABS Environment and Energy program meets the growing need for environment and energy information by integrating environmental, economic and social data.

To guide the activities of the ABS environment program an advisory board, consisting of Commonwealth and State government representatives, has been established.

Clients of the program include:

- Commonwealth Departments of: Environment and Water Resources; Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Industry, Tourism and Resources; Prime Minister and Cabinet; and the Treasury
- government agencies such as Bureau of Rural Sciences; Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Research Economics; National Land and Water Resources Audit; National Water Commission; Australian Greenhouse Office; and Bureau of Meteorology
- state/territory government departments with environment or energy responsibilities
- academic/research organisations, environmental groups, businesses and individuals.

Data usage are varied and include the formulation of policies, economic analysis, research and forecasting – all of which assist in managing the nation's environment. The program actively engages with many partners, particularly the Department of Environment and Water Resources, to improve Australia's system of environment statistics.

### Outputs

Program outputs are many and varied, ranging from generalist compendia and thematic publications to specialised topic specific publications and research papers, including:

- environmental accounts to understand the linkages between the availability, use and management of natural resources and economic activity. The ABS environmental accounts program features a four yearly *Water Account Australia* (cat. no. 4610.0) and energy and greenhouse gas emissions, minerals, forests and fish accounts
- biennial *Natural Resource Management on Australian Farms* (cat. no. 4620.0). The inaugural 2004–05 NRM survey focussed on native vegetation, weeds, pests, land and soil, and water. The provision of regional level data (at the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT2) level) reflected the spatial output requirements sought by key data users
- agricultural water use and management information in *Water Use on Australian Farms* (cat. no. 4618.0)
- household attitude and behaviour statistics relating to water, energy, transport and waste issues in *Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices* (cat. no. 4602.0)
- environmental aspects of thematic publications such as *Measures of Australia's Progress* (cat. no. 1370.0) and *Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends* (cat. no. 4613.0), which aims to present a broad selection of topical environmental statistics
- research-based outputs from experimental projects, such as *Land Management: Fitzroy and Livingstone Shires Queensland* (cat. no. 4651.0), showing the flexible spatial and comprehensive statistics obtained from the land parcel methodology.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- address data collection needs as identified in the Environmental Household Survey program review – due December 2007
- establish an annual release of *Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends* (cat. no. 4613.0) – due December 2007
- finalise the development of monetary water account – due December 2007
- produce Energy Accounts for Australia: 2005–06 – due June 2008
- engage in Council Of Australian Governments (COAG) streamlining energy and greenhouse gas reporting initiatives – due June 2008
- subject to funding, develop a strategy for an economy-wide environmental survey of Australian businesses – due June 2008
- subject to funding, improve the breadth, frequency and quality of the ABS Water Statistics program, including the flagship Water Account, Australia, to meet major user requirements identified in the National Water Initiative – due June 2008
- investigate processes for the ongoing collection of land statistics and the development of a land statistics framework – due June 2008
- develop an ongoing NRM statistics program – due June 2008
- work with Commonwealth Government agencies, and especially the Department of Environment and Water Resources, the National Water Commission, and the Centre of Environment and Energy Statistics Advisory Board to establish Environment and Energy information priorities; ways to improve Australia's system of environment statistics; and how best to lead as well as contribute to an improved system – ongoing.

# Agriculture

## Program Manager

Gemma Van Halderen  
Assistant Statistician  
Environment and  
Agriculture Statistics  
Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.8

06/07 4.2

### Staff usage 2005/06

34 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Industry, then  
Agriculture

## Objectives

The Agriculture program aims to satisfy the statistical needs of agricultural policy makers and other key users of agricultural statistics by providing reliable and relevant information on commodity production, as well as the economic and environmental aspects of agricultural operations. The main collections include an annual agricultural survey, a five-yearly agricultural census, and a range of monthly, quarterly and ad hoc surveys covering specific aspects of agriculture and related activity.

The main clients of the program include a range of Australian and state government agencies, industry organisations, financial institutions, academic institutions, and private sector organisations providing services to the agricultural sector or involved with food manufacturing.

Australian government agencies such as the Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and Environment and Water Resources, and the state Departments of Agriculture and Natural Resources use agriculture data for formulating and monitoring policies in respect to the various activities undertaken within the agriculture industry. Data are also used for managing the nation's natural resources and providing support services to the agriculture and rural communities.

Industry organisations such as the National Farmers' Federation, the Australian Wheat Board, Meat and Livestock Australia and Horticulture Australia use agriculture data to assess the relative performance of the various industries and in the formulation of industry development policies. The data are also important for the development of marketing and export strategies.

Data from this program's collections are also used within the ABS in the compilation of the Australian national accounts.

## Outputs

Estimates of the quantity of agricultural commodities produced each year, as well as some data on aspects related to production, are available from the annual commodity collection and published in *Agricultural Commodities, Australia* (cat. no. 7121.0). Preliminary estimates for the main commodities are released in *Principal Agricultural Commodities, Australia, Preliminary* (cat. no. 7111.0). Data related to the value of agricultural commodities are published annually in *Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia* (cat. no. 7503.0) with preliminary value figures available in *Value of Principal Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia, Preliminary* (cat. no. 7501.0). Data showing the structure of agricultural industries in terms of the number of farms within each industry, and the distribution of those farms based on both economic and physical size, are available.

These data are also available in electronic format in the AgSurf product on the ABARE website, [www.abare.gov.au](http://www.abare.gov.au), at Statistical Local Area level for census years (every fifth year) and at Statistical Division level in intercensal years.

Details of the number of livestock slaughtered for human consumption and the meat produced are available on a monthly basis in *Livestock and Meat, Australia, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 7218.0.55.001). Other data relating to poultry slaughtered, the exports of meat, live sheep and cattle, and the production of milk and wool received by brokers and dealers, are published quarterly in *Livestock Products, Australia* (cat. no. 7215.0).

Estimates of the stocks of grain on hand are also collected and published at various times.

Details of agricultural irrigation water use and management is available annually in *Water Use on Australian Farms* (cat. no. 4618.0).

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- code the 2006 Agricultural Census to a range of geographical areas – due October 2007
- provide output at regional levels from the 2006 Agricultural Census – due March 2008
- provide output at finer geographical levels from the 2006 Agricultural Census – due May 2008
- development of web-based products for 2006 Agricultural Census – due September 2008
- continuation of work on the 2007-2010 intercensal program of Agriculture surveys on an Australian Business Register frame and using ANZSIC 2006 – ongoing.



## Program Manager

Garth Bode  
Assistant Statistician  
Labour and Demography  
Statistics Branch

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 4.1

06/07 5.0

### Staff usage 2005/06

50 staff years

## References

### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
People, then  
Demography

## Objectives

The Demography program has the following objectives:

- to produce statistics required by legislation
- to assist in the formulation and monitoring of government policies, and in the planning and administration of government programs
- to enable planning and market analyses by businesses
- to enable research and analyses by governments, businesses, academic institutions and others into the causes and consequences of population change.

Reflecting the use of population estimates for electoral and funding purposes, the main clients of the program are: Australian and state electoral commissions; Australian, state and territory treasuries; and Commonwealth, state and Northern Territory grants commissions. Within the ABS, demographic estimates and projections are the basis for population survey benchmarks. Other clients include agencies involved in issues associated with migration and multicultural affairs, local area planning, health, the Indigenous population, family and community services, the environment and international tourism.

## Outputs

The key output is quarterly state and territory population estimates published in *Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0).

The program produces estimates of the total population by age, sex, country of birth, marital status and geographical distribution; estimates of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population; and estimates of families and households. Regular statistics are also produced on births, deaths, overseas arrivals and departures, and internal migration. Projections of population, families and households according to specified demographic assumptions are published on a regular basis and produced for individual clients. Population benchmarks are provided for use in ABS and other population surveys. In addition to producing demographic statistics, courses on understanding demographic data are conducted and an electronic newsletter is sent to major clients.

Other major publications include: *Births, Australia* (cat. no. 3301.0); *Deaths, Australia* (cat. no. 3302.0); *Migration, Australia* (cat. no. 3412.0); *Regional Population Growth, Australia* (cat. no. 3218.0); *Population Projections, Australia* (cat. no. 3222.0); and *Household and Family Projections, Australia* (cat. no. 3236.0). In addition, an extensive range of historical data is available on the ABS web site in *Australian Historical Population Statistics, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 3105.0.65.001).

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- prepare Australian, state and territory population estimates based on the results of the 2006 Census of Population and Housing – due June 2008
- prepare small area (Statistical Local Area and Local Government area) and Indigenous population estimates based on the results of the 2006 Census of Population and Housing – preliminary results due August 2007, final results due August 2008
- update demographic assumptions so as to prepare and release the next series of population projections based on the results of the 2006 Census of Population and Housing – due September 2008
- implement improved methods for estimating net overseas migration and monitor estimates produced from the improved methods – annually from March 2009
- prepare and release estimates and projections of the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population based on the 2006 Census of Population and Housing – due July 2009
- in conjunction with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, continue to participate in a review of data sources and statistical methods used in measuring international movements and migration – ongoing
- implement outcomes of the review of processes and sources for deriving estimated resident population – ongoing
- implement quality improvement program for processing administrative data on births and deaths – ongoing
- investigate data sources and methods for improving the quality of demographic indicators (such as mortality and fertility estimates, population estimates and projections) for the Indigenous population – ongoing
- support the Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages in areas impacting on demographic statistical data, including the identification of Indigenous people in birth and death registrations and the provision of data to the ABS – ongoing.

## Rural and Regional

### Program Manager

Mike McGrath  
Regional Director  
South Australian Office

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 1.2

06/07 1.4

#### Staff usage 2005/06

16 staff years

### References

#### Theme page

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Under Themes select  
Regional

#### Other references

*Information Paper:  
Regional Research in  
Australia – the Statistical  
Dimension: an Information  
Development Plan for  
Rural and Regional  
Statistics* (cat. no. 1362.0)

*National Regional Profile*  
(cat. no. 1379.0.55.001)

[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)  
Under Regional Statistics  
select Main Areas – by  
Name or Main Areas – by  
Map

### Objectives

The Rural and Regional Statistics program aims to improve the availability of regional data including data at metropolitan, non-metropolitan, urban and rural levels. Activities undertaken under the program include improving access to, and dissemination of, ABS data and data from other sources, and developing new indicators where feasible. A particular focus of this work is on utilising administrative data maintained by Australian Government and state/territory government agencies, where data have a location identifier with the potential to be used in presenting data geographically. The activities of the Rural and Regional Statistics Program are undertaken by the Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre and by Regional Statistics Units (RSUs) in each ABS state and territory office.

The Rural and Regional Statistics Program provides leadership across the National Statistical Service. It coordinates, produces and disseminates statistics that will: assist policy analysts and researchers understand change across rural, regional and remote areas of Australia; meet the regional policy priority needs of Australian government agencies; and meet the needs of other researchers and policy analysts interested in comparative assessment between regions in different states and territories.

### Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- statistical leadership to improve the access to, availability and quality of regional statistics
- the *National Regional Profile* (cat. nos 1379.0.55.001 and 1379.0.55.002) product (NRP) – a web-based suite of statistics for regions, including Local Government Areas and other areas in the Main Structure of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification, containing data spanning five years and updated annually
- experimental estimates and indicators from administrative data, such as the Australian Taxation Office personal and business income tax data, and Centrelink data on income support
- *Perspectives on Regional Australia* (cat. nos 1380.0.55.001, 1380.0.55.002 and subsequent) – a series of publications analysing, at varying geographic levels, a range of topics with a particular focus on regional Australia.
- account management of the local government sector with regard to its small area information needs.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- disseminate results and analysis from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing as part of the Perspectives on Regional Australia publication series – ongoing throughout 2007–08
- build extensive collaborative working arrangements with stakeholders in the regional statistics field – ongoing
- improve the dissemination of information through a Regional Statistics Newsletter, the theme page on the ABS web site, and other appropriate avenues, such as through client networks, conferences, seminars and workshops – ongoing
- implement the recommendations from the Rural and Regional Statistics Information Development Plan, and maintain an awareness of emerging data priority needs – ongoing
- increase the availability of regional statistics, using mesh block/address coder developments to support the geographic classification of administrative data sets, and enable access to high priority data sets through ABS regional statistics databases and other means – ongoing.

**INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS**

## Program Manager

Paul Williams  
Acting First Assistant  
Statistician  
Population and  
Environment Statistics  
Division

## Resources

### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 2.2

06/07 2.2

### Staff usage 2005/06

25 staff years

## Objectives

The Geography program has the following objectives:

- to set, maintain and promote geographic, mapping and Geographic Information System (GIS) standards for the ABS
- to improve ABS' flexibility in spatial statistics by implementing appropriate GIS and geocoding technology for the collection, production and dissemination of such statistics
- to provide geographic analysis, mapping and GIS support services for the ABS
- to develop efficient and user-friendly products for the integration and dissemination of ABS and selected non-ABS spatial statistics.

## Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- the *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) – Electronic Structures, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 1216.0.15.001), the classification manual *Statistical Geography Volume 1 – Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC)* (cat. no. 1216.0), and digital map boundaries
- concordances for relating statistics to different geographical units
- the ABS Master Spatial Database
- Mesh Block design and mapping to support the execution of the Census
- geographical products to support ABS outputs such as reference maps and topographic databases
- advice and support services to meet the mapping, address coding, GIS, geographical classification and spatial data management needs of the ABS and external clients.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- finalise and publish the first official (Census) version of Mesh Blocks – due September 2007
- publish *Statistical Geography Volume 1 – ASGC* (cat. no. 1216.0), *Statistical Geography Volume 2 – Census Geographic Areas of Australia* (cat. no. 2905.0) and *Statistical Geography Volume 3 – Urban Centres/Localities* (cat. no. 2909.0) – due October 2007
- evaluate and select new technologies to support web based mapping services – due June 2008
- review the ASGC, publish and implement a new standard – due June 2009
- develop systems and procedures for 2011 Census Field operations – due June 2009
- undertake census workload design and provision of workload maps for Census field operations – due June 2010
- improve address coding systems, based on working with the Public Sector Mapping Agencies (PSMA) to improve the Geocoded National Address File and also by supplementing this data with internal address information, such as non private dwellings – ongoing
- engage with external agencies to promote and support the adoption of Mesh Blocks as the building block for administrative boundaries – ongoing
- undertake Mesh Block maintenance to identify areas of growth – ongoing
- undertake GIS analysis projects in conjunction with subject matter areas – ongoing.

## Population Survey Operations

### Program Manager

Ian Brodie-Reed  
Assistant Statistician  
Integrated Collection  
Branch

### Resources

#### *Direct costs (\$m)*

05/06 21.3

06/07 28.9

#### *Staff usage 2005/06*

97 staff years

### References

#### *Household Surveys Charter*

At [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) select  
Survey & Participant  
Information on the  
horizontal navigation bar,  
then Household Surveys  
Charter

### Objectives

Population Survey Operations (PSO) provides the data collection service for the ABS Household Survey Program. This involves managing the field activities of approximately 600 home based Interviewers. The primary objective of PSO is to provide cost effective, nationally consistent, high quality, and timely collection of household survey data, including input processing for the Monthly Population Survey. In meeting this objective, PSO has related objectives in the following areas:

- sample generation and maintenance
- Interviewer recruitment, training and management
- national procedures for field work
- survey testing
- survey interviewing, input processing and coding of data collected (where applicable)
- provision of survey management information and performance reporting
- financial planning and management of the collection service.

### Outputs

The main outputs of PSO are:

- survey enumeration data files for output processing by Household Survey Centres
- management information related to survey enumeration (response rates, cost, etc.)
- qualitative reports on survey design and enumeration based on feedback from operations and field staff
- updated household survey sample frame.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- make improvements to systems including Interviewer pays, work allocation and sample frame maintenance – due July 2007
- improve estimation and monitoring of enumeration costs – due September 2007
- improve interviewer workforce planning – due November 2007
- further develop and deliver budget, management information and performance reporting – due December 2007
- investigate multimodal data collection options – due June 2008
- develop, implement and administer the next ABS Interviewers Certified Agreement – due July 2008.

### Program Manager

Ian Brodie-Reed  
Assistant Statistician  
Integrated Collection  
Branch

### Resources

#### *Direct costs (\$m)*

05/06 14.7

06/07 22.0

#### *Staff usage 2005/06*

187 staff years

### References

#### *Business Surveys Charter*

At [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) select Survey & Participant Information on the horizontal navigation bar, then Business Surveys Charter

### Objectives

The Economic Statistics Data Centre (ESDC) is responsible for managing the data collection phase of business surveys.

Its key objectives are to:

- maintain comprehensive structural information about businesses to enable consistent frames to be generated for ABS business-related statistical collections
- be the major agent for contact with providers of statistical data, and, as such, play a strong provider advocacy role
- provide accurate, timely and responsive statistical and infrastructure support to statistical collections
- provide professional, high quality, efficient and innovative paper and electronic data capture services for ABS collection areas and providers
- enhance ABS capacity to use administrative data across the ABS.

### Outputs

The ESDC:

- maintains up-to-date and high quality business survey frames – that is, lists of Australian businesses sourced from the Australian Taxation Office and ABS profiling of large businesses
- designs forms to collect survey data in accordance with current standards
- organises printing, dispatch and secure collection of survey forms, and captures the data associated with completed forms
- responds to provider queries, including questions about survey forms, submission requirements, complaints and requests for exemptions
- contacts providers to follow-up outstanding survey forms, and applies compliance procedures for non-responding businesses
- supports the secure acquisition and management of electronic and administrative data.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- collaborate with other key agencies on the development of Standard Business Reporting from the 2007–08 year onwards, and establish a Data Definitions Coordination Team – due 2007
- enhance provider management activities by establishing a provider consultation forum – due December 2007
- replace the infrastructure underpinning the register of businesses, and ensure a seamless transition from the old to new system – due March 2008
- develop a comprehensive quality management framework incorporating quality measures across all ESDC operations – due December 2008
- improve the management of data received electronically, including the development of an automatic dispatch and up-load facility – due June 2009
- improve the acquisition, processing and management of business data from the Australian Taxation Office and from businesses, and transfer these data into ABS business systems – ongoing
- implement tailored forms to better meet provider needs, and improve the efficiency of the capture of data from those forms – ongoing.



## Data Management and Classifications

### Program Manager

David Lengyel  
Acting Assistant Statistician  
Data Management and  
Classifications Branch

### Resources

*Direct costs (\$m)*

05/06 5.1

06/07 5.6

*Staff usage 2005/06*

55 staff years

### References

At <[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)>, select Methods, Classifications, Concepts & Standards on the horizontal navigation bar

### Objectives

The Data Management and Classifications program provides important support functions that underpin the ABS mission. The program is responsible for promoting the comparability, integration and quality of ABS statistics, through the use of standard concepts, definitions, classifications and procedures. It is also responsible for the infrastructure used to hold key definitional metadata and to store statistical data from which ABS outputs are sourced.

The program seeks to achieve this by:

- setting and reviewing ABS policies and principles for key statistical standards and classifications, and for data and metadata management best practice
- developing, maintaining and reviewing related infrastructure
- providing leadership and support to subject matter areas on the implementation of key standards, practices and procedures.

### Outputs

Key outputs from the programs cover the following areas:

- development and maintenance of key national standards on statistical units, concepts, definitions, questions and classifications that underpin population, social and economic statistics
- development and maintenance of key infrastructure and processes for implementing relevant standards and classifications across ABS collections
- continuity of Information Warehouse and Corporate Metadata Repository infrastructure that underpin the production of ABS statistics
- data management policies and best practice advice to subject matter areas
- metadata policies and guidelines for the National Data Network.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- review and maintain key statistical standards and classifications for ABS population, social and economic statistics
- provide training and assistance to subject matter areas in the use and/or development of statistical standards and associated tools for their implementation
- maintain and extend the ABS Information Warehouse as the central, authoritative repository for holding, managing and sourcing output data
- design, develop and implement data and metadata management models, practices and infrastructure for the National Data Network
- re-develop, align and integrate key data and metadata management infrastructure with mainstream input processing, output production and data archiving systems as proposed in the End to End Metadata Management Strategy
- promulgate relevant standards for population and economic statistics on the ABS intranet and ABS website
- assist in the implementation and loading of content into the Data Element Repository and Questionnaire Development Tool
- assess the impact of changes to Australian Accounting Standards and amend standard ABS questions wording as necessary
- plan and coordinate the implementation of ANZSCO in ABS statistics and external data collection activities
- assist in and track the implementation of ANSZIC 06 across ABS economic and population statistical collections; assist external users to understand and manage the resultant impacts
- develop an implementation guide and training material to support the adoption of the International Central Product Classification
- review the Standard Economic Sector Classifications of Australia
- maintain and improve autocoding facilities and computer assisted coding indexes.

## Program Manager

Geoff Lee  
First Assistant Statistician  
Methodology and Data  
Management Division

## Resources

*Direct costs (\$m)*

05/06 10.7

06/07 10.9

*Staff usage 2005/06*

127 staff years

## References

*Methodology Research Papers series* (cat. no. 1351.0.55.001 and subsequent)

*Modellers' Database* (cat. no. 1364.0.15.003)

*Treasury Model of the Australian Economy – TSP Version* (cat. no. 1364.0.15.001)

*Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0)

## Objectives

The Methodology program provides specialist services to meet new and ongoing demands in statistics. Much of the work is internally focussed, with the goal of ensuring the methods underlying ABS outputs are based on sound, defensible statistical principles and are cost effective. There is also an external component to the Division's work, in developing analytic products.

Internally, the Methodology program has specific responsibilities for supporting the statistical collection process. The program provides advice on survey design and methods, and on data quality, through all stages of the survey cycle. The program also undertakes research on statistical methods to improve the efficiency and accuracy of ABS work. It undertakes seasonal adjustment, time series analysis (including trend estimation), and a variety of other analytic work to assist the interpretation of socioeconomic indicators.

## Outputs

The program's main internal products include specialist support for survey design, estimation and analysis, and practices and standards for design of data collection instruments. The program applies operation research techniques to improve the cost efficiency of ABS collections. It conducts quality reviews of methods and statistical products which contribute to improvements in data quality and to reductions in the load on providers. The program develops methods to protect data confidentiality of microdata files and routine tabular outputs, which are used to improve access to microdata and other statistical information, whilst ensuring the ABS legislative obligation to preserve confidentiality is met. It also undertakes time series and other analyses which appear in numerous ABS publications. The program supports training courses on mathematical, statistical, analytical and other methodological issues for all ABS staff.

Externally, the Methodology program develops analytical products including new time series, databases and models which measure socioeconomic concepts. The program produces a series of *Research Papers* (cat. no. 1351.0) which present the results of current research or analysis, often of an experimental nature, to encourage discussion and comment.

There are also several regular products. The *Modellers' Database* (cat. no. 1364.0.15.003) is used by economists to understand and forecast short and medium term developments in the Australian macro-economy. It was developed by the Treasury and is maintained jointly by the Treasury and the ABS. The *Treasury Model of the Australian Economy – TSP Version* (cat. no. 1364.0.15.001) permits users to run forecasts and to simulate the effects of policy settings. Both are released quarterly.

*Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0) is a monthly compendium which provides a convenient and comprehensive source of economic time series, including historical data, and also contains articles on the analysis and interpretation of socioeconomic data.

## Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- bring to fruition ABS work in measuring the stock and accumulation of human capital – due September 2007
- undertake quality studies on 2006 Population Census data to develop methods for eventually creating the Statistical Longitudinal Census Data Set and a method for evaluating the linkage over time – due December 2007
- in collaboration with the Census program, produce the socioeconomic indexes for areas based on the 2006 Population Census, addressing evolving user needs and uses of these indexes – due March 2008
- improve tools and procedures for managing the quality of statistical collections, and enhance the accessibility and use of information about quality of ABS statistics – due June 2008
- apply operation research techniques to improving the cost efficiency of population survey operations and economic data collection – due June 2008
- support new integrated processing systems for household surveys and for business surveys – due June 2008
- develop and implement methods that will expand access to ABS unit record data and detailed tables while still safeguarding the confidentiality of data – due December 2008
- collaborate with universities through partnering in Australian Research Council linkage grants in the area of price index compilation, microsimulation and data modelling – due December 2008
- conclude investigations and develop sample design, estimation and imputation methods which take full advantage of tax data to reduce respondent load, and increase the richness of statistical outputs – due June 2009
- provide and implement methodologies for measuring and managing the statistical consequences of introducing a new industry classification (ANZSIC 2006) for business surveys – due June 2009
- redesign sample and estimation methods for household surveys with a view to significantly enhancing operational efficiency and producing a far richer range of inter-related data outputs – due June 2009
- implement improved time series analysis methodologies for enhancing the coherence and inter relatability of ABS time series outputs – due June 2009.

## Customer Service

### Program Manager

Kerrie Duff  
Assistant Statistician  
Customer Services Branch

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 5.6

06/07 5.7

#### Staff usage 2005/06

69 staff years

### Objectives

The Customer Services program is responsible for providing statistical data information services to ABS clients and customers, including governments, businesses, media, educational institutions, libraries, other private organisations and members of the community generally. It is also responsible for gathering market intelligence and client/customer insights to help the ABS make informed decisions about dissemination services delivery, and product and service developments.

The program's key objective is to maximise the use and users of ABS and statistics; optimising the mix of dissemination channels and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of information service delivery.

The program also provides information products and services that align with identified customer needs.

The ABS statistical programs are also major clients of the Customer Services program. The Customer Services program works with ABS business partners to provides many of the services and processes by which statistical releases are prepared. Additionally, the program ensures that the presentation and usability of ABS products are enhanced by the use of relevant standards based on objective research.

### Outputs

The main output of the program is in the provision of a range of ABS product and delivery options to clients and customers, which includes:

- the ABS web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>
- publications, main features, datacubes and time series spreadsheets which are published to the ABS website
- Flagship publications such as Year Book Australia
- information consultancies, providing data that is tailored to customer's needs
- Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFS), which are available in CD-ROM format, via the RADL™ or ABSDL
- telephone information and referral services.

Other outputs from the program include publishing and dissemination standards and publishing systems infrastructure and advice services such as the daily Release Advice on the ABS website. In addition, the ABS Pricing policy and Client Servicing policy is maintained by the program

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- review and revise the client servicing framework, including the client servicing programs
- measure the performance of ABS products and service channels
- improve the ABS website, in particular to improve notifications services, print friendly function and navigation
- use data visualisation techniques to enhance the presentation of data on the ABS website
- increasing statistical literacy, particularly within the schools sector
- establish infrastructure to support e-publications and e-Metadata visions
- increase automation within publishing systems
- enhance information consultancy dissemination and pricing systems
- improve functionality, usability and increase the audit capability of RADL™/ABSDL
- provide access to Census Table Builder via RADL™
- develop and implement Survey Table Builder
- establish policy on access to ABS microdata for off-shore researchers.

## Technology Services

### Program Manager

Jenine Borowik  
First Assistant Statistician  
Technology Services  
Division

### Resources

#### *Direct costs (\$m)*

05/06 52.3

06/07 53.0

#### *Staff usage 2005/06*

413 staff years

### Objectives

The key objectives for Technology Services Division (TSD) are to:

- provide reliable, value for money, IT services and infrastructure that support ABS' 'business as usual'
- deliver new systems to meet the objectives of the Population Census, Household and Business surveys
- continue support for statistical leadership initiatives, including the National Data Network (NDN)
- use technologies both within the ABS and externally to enable statistical software and services to be readily shared with other agencies
- enhance ABS capacity to respond to new demand
- support increased access to statistics
- ensure the security of sensitive data and statistics
- enhance productivity by fostering effective use of IT environment
- support innovative and productive ways of working
- maintain security vigilance for the ABS and its environment.

### Outputs

TSD is an integral part of the ABS. It has three branches, Technology Applications, Technology Infrastructure and Technology Research, which serve the ABS with high quality information and technology leadership, expertise in the application of technology for business outcomes, and support to the organisation in providing an effective statistical service.

TSD supports all major processes for statistical and administrative functions of the ABS, and maintains and develops the underlying technology systems and infrastructure. The main outputs of the program are:

- a full range of application analysis, design, programming, acquisition and commissioning services to assist improving ABS business processes
- leadership to clients on new and developing technologies
- a reliable and secure technology infrastructure service
- an investment approach to managing the organisation's technology
- an effective Knowledge Management environment
- development and implementation of enterprise architecture strategies
- input to whole of government strategies for the application of technology to business processes.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to support the development or acquisition of systems and infrastructure for core business activities including:

- the Integrated System for Household Surveys, re-engineering the Household Survey end-to-end processing model – progressively to June 2008
- the NDN, and a service-oriented architecture to support statistical leadership initiatives – progressively to June 2008
- multimodal collection of data – progressively to June 2008
- improved metadata management – progressively to June 2008
- the Australian Population Census, the ABS Website and key business and household surveys – ongoing
- business process improvement – ongoing.

## Corporate Services

### Program Manager

Teresa Dickinson  
Acting First Assistant  
Statistician  
Corporate Services Division

### Resources

#### Direct costs (\$m)

05/06 21.2

06/07 20.3

#### Staff usage 2005/06

168 staff years

### Objectives

Corporate Services Division (CSD) provides a range of services to support the ABS and its employees in the achievement of business objectives. Some require direct delivery of services, others involve a support and coordination role. Within an environment of continuous improvement, CSD:

- partners with other areas in the ABS in seeking opportunities to drive productivity improvements
- provides leadership in driving required cultural and behavioural change
- ensures the ABS has a workforce capable of delivering on its work program commitments
- drives appropriate management of financial resources and physical assets within the ABS
- provides comprehensive, timely and cost-effective people and financial management services, while ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and government directions
- ensures a fair, diverse, safe and healthy work environment for all employees
- provides accurate and timely reporting on the ABS' financial position.

While services are provided to all ABS employees, support, guidance, coordination and liaison roles are provided to managers, cost centres and governance bodies. Externally, CSD engages with relevant Commonwealth agencies for governance and audit purposes.

### Outputs

Outputs for CSD fall into two categories: services that are delivered to ABS employees and policy advice, framework development and internal consultancy. Services are provided through four organisational groups: Financial Management; Office of the Statistician; Human Resources Branch; and Business Support Branch. Each operates on a national basis, offering services across all offices. Some national business lines are wholly delivered from locations other than central office e.g. Pay and Entitlements.

In particular, CSD delivers:

- maintenance and development of corporate support systems and services
- workforce capability development, recruitment processing and selection process support
- strategic frameworks for a range of Human Resource (HR) initiatives
- development and administration of employment agreements
- people management services and support
- pay and entitlements processing
- occupational health and safety (OHS) policy, advice and case management
- business continuity planning
- management of the property function across ABS
- management of procurement and contracts across ABS
- fleet and travel services
- management of building and physical environment
- external and internal reporting on the ABS' financial position
- accounts payable, revenue reporting and receivable services
- education and advice on appropriate management of financial resources and accounting policies and procedures
- material and responses that comply with external reporting requirements.

### Developments

The main medium term developments are to:

- improve the timeliness and consistency of financial reporting and forecasting – due September 2007
- complete a major upgrade of ABS business continuity plans and develop continuity planning capability across all key business activities – due December 2007
- integrate and improve procurement and contracting functions and provide improved support to procurement delegates and staff – due December 2007
- focus on development and implementation of coordinated strategies to enhance management and leadership skills across the ABS – due December 2008
- negotiate the new ABS Certified Agreement (2008) – due June 2009
- identify the “shape” of the required ABS workforce in the medium and longer term and develop and implement the strategies required to create the desired workforce profile – due December 2009
- investigate renewal of major corporate systems for HR and related people processes and services (PePSI project) – due December 2010
- identify and pursue strategies that deliver improved and efficient corporate services to the ABS – ongoing
- increase awareness and use of the performance management system as a way to improve performance – ongoing
- review the Policy and Legislation Manual for ABS staff, to improve the currency and accessibility of information – due June 2008
- continue to evolve the National Statistical Training Institute work program to meet internal and external training requirements – ongoing.



## State and Territory Statistical Services

### Resources

#### *Direct costs (\$m)*

05/06 8.1

06/07 8.0

#### *Staff usage 2005/06*

111 staff years

### Objectives

The State and Territory Statistical Services (STSS) program provides a flexible and responsive service to meet the priority statistical needs of state and territory governments and other important state and territory based clients, in addition to those met by the ongoing statistical outputs of the ABS. The STSS project supports the ABS objective of an expanded and improved National Statistical Service (NSS) within each state and territory.

The outcomes expected of the STSS project are:

- strong, collaborative relationships with state and territory governments
- a timely, relevant, and responsive ad hoc statistical service that meets high priority state and territory needs beyond those that can be satisfied by the ABS national programs
- as a component of the NSS:
  - increased availability of good quality state and territory and regional data from ABS and non-ABS sources that meets high priority state and territory statistical needs, as far as possible within national standards and frameworks
  - informed and increased use of state and territory and regional data from ABS and non-ABS sources
  - support the establishment of the National Data Network (NDN), that provides a distributed library of data and related services across government for use in policy analysis and research
- enhanced ABS decisions from the input of state and territory views to ABS program reviews, research, and other specific work program activities.

### Outputs

The main outputs of the STSS project are:

- state and territory government statistical policy/coordination committees, that facilitate collaborative strategies for improved statistical coordination with each jurisdiction
- annual statistical priorities summaries for each state and territory as an input to the ABS forward work program development, and the production of a coordinated key issues paper for discussion at the State Statistical Forum
- an annual household survey, or alternative statistical project, for each state and territory government. The survey topic or project varies each year and between jurisdictions, and is chosen in consultation with the relevant state and territory governments
- statistical projects designed to meet high priority unmet needs of state and territory governments
- in collaboration with state and territory governments, and as a component of the NSS, projects undertaken to improve the quality, coherence, comparability, and availability of administrative and other data held or collected by state and territory government agencies
- statistical consultancy services covering a wide range of services including survey design, statistical analysis, methodological advice and assistance, and a range of statistical training and development activities
- dissemination of ABS and other statistics to satisfy state and territory needs beyond those met by ABS national programs
- advice and intelligence to ABS national programs on relevant state and territory statistical needs and issues
- provision of support for the development and implementation of the National Data Network infrastructure and information resources in states and territories
- provision of support to state and territory demography work programs as required.

### Developments

The main medium term developments in the project are to:

- on an annual basis, undertake the development and processing of state and territory household surveys, or alternative statistical projects, and general outputs – ongoing
- enhance ABS contacts and networks with state and territory government agencies and optimise feedback of relevant statistical information to and from the ABS – ongoing
- identify and evaluate the demand for, and supply of, statistical data, and in collaboration with ABS programs and state and territory governments, develop strategies to fill high priority demand gaps – ongoing
- improve the range and quality of regional data, and the quality of Indigenous identification in key non-ABS administrative datasets – ongoing
- support the implementation of the NSS by providing assistance to state and territory governments, including statistical training and advice on implementing data management best practice guidelines, to improve the quality, coherence, comparability, and availability of statistics from key state and territory administrative datasets and other data holdings – ongoing
- develop and undertake ad hoc statistical projects, including strategic outposts, for state and territory governments – ongoing
- provide assistance with the development of the National Data Network infrastructure and information sources in states and territories – ongoing.



## APPENDIX

## Appendix

### Statistics user groups advising the ABS

The user groups advising the ABS on its forward work program include:

#### National Groups

- Advisory Committee on Australian and International Disability Data
- Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics
- Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey Reference Group
- Agriculture Statistics User Forum
- Australia—New Zealand Population Workshop
- Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations Reference Group
- Australian Bureau of Statistics—Australian Taxation Office High Level Liaison Committee
- Australian Bureau of Statistics—Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources High Level Liaison Committee
- Biotechnology Statistics User Group
- Business Longitudinal Database External Advisory Group
- Centre of Environment and Energy Statistics Advisory Board
  - Energy Statistics Discussion Group
  - Water Statistics User Group
  - Land and Natural Resource Management Statistics User Group
- Childcare and Early Years Learning Survey Reference Group
- Children and Youth Statistics Advisory Group
- Cultural Ministers' Council Statistics Working Group
- Demography Statistics Advisory Group
- Economic Statistics User Group
- Education and Training Statistics Advisory Group
- Family Statistics Advisory Group
- General Social Survey Reference Group
- Health Data Standards Committee
- Health Statistical Information Committee
- Health Statistics Advisory Group
- Household Income and Expenditure Statistics User Advisory Group
- Information and Communication Technology Statistics Reference Group
- Innovation Survey Technical Reference Group
- Input-Output Statistics User Group
- International Accounts Reference Group
- International Trade in Services User Group
- Labour Statistics Advisory Group
- Methodology Advisory Group
- Migrant Statistics Reference Group
- Mining User Advisory Group
- National Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Information and Data
- National Ageing Statistics Advisory Group
- National Committee for Housing Information
- National Community Services Information Management Group
- National Corrective Services Statistics Advisory Group
- National Crime Statistics Advisory Group
- National Criminal Courts Statistics Advisory Group
- National Health Information Group Management Principal Committee
- National Health Information Group Statistical Information Committee
- Passenger Card Data User Group
- Passenger Card Steering Group

- Personal Safety Survey Advisory Group
- Population Estimates Technical Workshop
- Population Health Information Development Group
- Private Hospital Statistics User Group
- Productivity Measurement Reference Group
- Research and Development Statistics User Forum
- Rural and Regional Statistics Advisory Group
- Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport Research Group
- State Accounts User Group
- Statistical Clearing House User Group
- Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision
- Steering Group for the Crime and Justice Information Development Plan
- Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers Advisory Group
- Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing Reference Group
- Time Use Survey Advisory Group
- Transport Statistics User Group.

#### **State Government Groups**

- Statistical Coordination and User Forum (New South Wales)
- Victorian Statistical Advisory Forum
- Queensland State Statistical Consultative Committee
- State Statistical Priorities Committee (South Australia)
- Statistical Policy Committee and Economic (Western Australia)
- Social Statistics Consultative Groups (Western Australia)
- Statistical Policy Committee (Tasmania)
- Tasmanian Statistical Advisory Committee
- Northern Territory Statistical Liaison Committee
- Australian Capital Territory Statistical Co-ordination Committee.

